

Journey to Work

Chapter 6: Journey to Work

JOURNEY TO WORK

The U.S. Census Bureau collects several types of data about 'Journey to Work' and household characteristics which provide insights into the commuting patterns of workers 16 years and older.

Highlights include:

- **About 12% (83,263) of all households in the City do not have access to a vehicle**, down slightly from 13% in 1990. Super Neighborhoods in the southwest outside Loop 610 experienced a tremendous increase in number of households with no access to a vehicle between 1990 and 2000. Strong population growth and/or the fact that much there is a large low-income population in this area could have played a role in this increase.
- **Renter households are significantly more likely to have no access to a vehicle.** Of all households without access to a vehicle in 2000, 4 out of 5 were renter-households.
- Of all races, Black households had the highest proportion (19%) with no access to a vehicle. Of all Hispanic households, 14% did not have access to a vehicle.
- **Only minor changes occurred in commuting patterns of workers since 1990.** Overall, the largest proportion of workers drive alone, leave home between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m., and spend less than 30 minutes on the journey. With a few exceptions, workers at the City's periphery tend to drive alone, leave earlier, and have longer commutes.
- **Super Neighborhoods just east of Downtown diverge from the wider City trends.** Despite living close to the central city, workers in these areas leave for work earlier and have longer commute times. In addition, higher proportions of workers in these areas use public transit or carpooling and do not have access to a vehicle. This is not surprising given the lower incomes prevalent in many of these areas.
- **A significant majority of carpools are 2-person carpools.** Of all workers that carpool, about 70% are in 2-person carpools. The remainder are split evenly between 3-person carpools and carpools of 4-persons or greater. Workers who utilize carpools are most concentrated along major freeways such as I-45 and US 59 and to a lesser degree I-10 and US 290.
- **Transit usage decreased marginally since 1990.** In 2000, there were 49,434 workers using public transit to get to work, a decrease of 2,360 workers since 1990. Transit usage is higher closer to Downtown and inside Loop 610 as well as in several Super Neighborhoods to the southwest outside Loop 610, farther from the central city, where there are large populations with lower incomes.

Chapter 6: Journey to Work

MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK

The U.S. Census Bureau collects data on how workers get to work to provide insights on their transportation choices.

In 2000, almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of workers drove to work alone. Of the remainder, more than twice as many people carpool as use public transit. The percentage of workers using other means (motorcycle, bicycle, walking or other) is fairly small, less than 1% for each.

Between 1990 and 2000, the number of workers driving alone, carpooling, or using other means to get to work increased, while those using public transit decreased. The method of getting to work that increased the most was “Drive Alone” category, which gained 17,000 workers. This growth could be due to population growth. In contrast, the number of workers using public transit to get to work decreased by 2,680. Since population increased overall, this is most likely due to workers choosing other means of transportation.

Despite these shifts in the number of workers using different means of transportation, the *proportion* of workers in each category changed only minimally. For example, workers who drove alone to work accounted for 72% of all workers in 2000, down slightly from 73% in 1990, and those who carpooled accounted for 16% in 2000, up slightly from 15% in 1990.

Drive Alone

Citywide, 72% of workers drive to work alone. In the Super Neighborhoods west of Down-

“Means of transportation to work” refers to the principal mode of travel or type of conveyance the worker used to get from home to work. This includes:

‘Drive Alone’: those who drove alone to work, or were driven to work by someone who then drove back home or to a non-work destination.

‘Carpool’: those who reported that two or more people usually rode to work in the vehicle.

‘Public Transportation’: those who took a bus or trolley bus, streetcar or trolley car, subway or elevated, railroad, ferryboat, or taxicab.

‘Other Means’: those who used a mode of travel that is not any of the above (such as Walk, Bike, Motorcycle etc).

‘Work from Home’: those who worked from home.

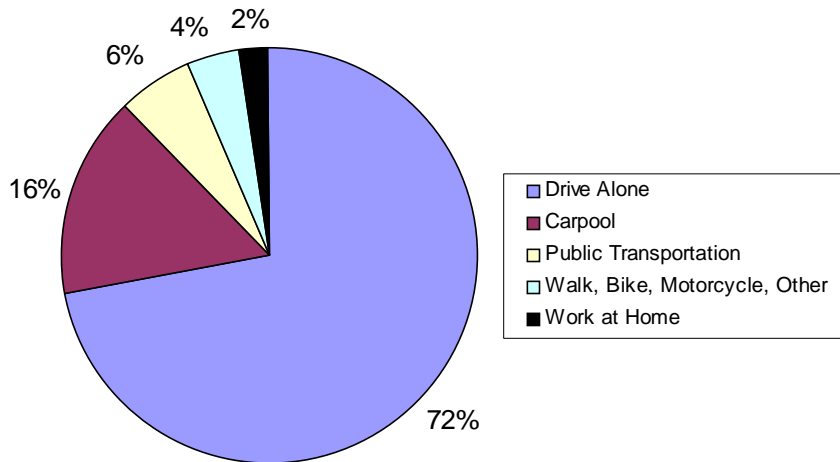
Throughout this chapter, the term ‘workers’ will be used to refer to workers 16 years and older.

town, the far northeast, and far southeast, more than 80% of workers drove to work alone; a pattern largely unchanged since 1990. Downtown has the lowest percentage of people driving to work alone (45%) followed by Greater Third Ward (44%).

Generally, increases in the number of workers driving alone followed areas of population growth such as the far west, Kingwood, and Clear Lake. However, the southwest, which generally saw strong population growth between 1990 and 2000, saw decreases in the number of workers that drove to work alone. This could be due to factors such as changing demographics (much of the population is low income and might not be able to afford a

Chapter 6: Journey to Work

Figure 6.1
Means of Travel to Work for Workers
16 years and Over: 2000

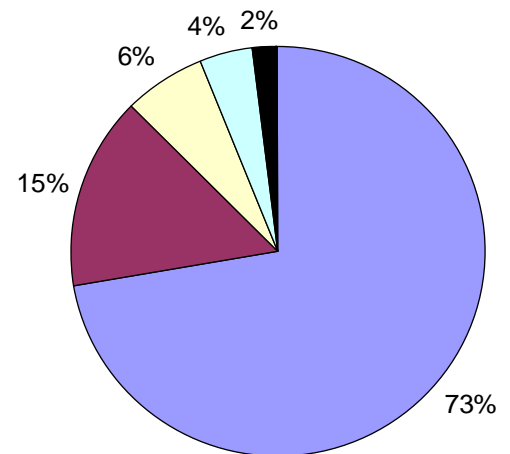


private vehicle) or the fact that population growth adds to traffic congestion, which may encourage alternate commute methods such as carpooling and public transit.

Carpool

Citywide, 133,983 workers (16%) travel to work in a carpool. Carpoolers are most concentrated adjacent to I-45 (north and south of Downtown), I-10 (especially to the west), and US-59 (especially to the southwest, but to the northeast as well) as well as generally east of Downtown. Fondren Gardens and Gulfgate/ Pine Valley Super Neighborhoods, in the far southwest, have the highest percentage of people carpooling to work at 32%. Other areas with high percentages include Eastex/ Jensen and Northside/ Northline Super Neighborhoods and just east of downtown. These patterns are largely unchanged from 1990.

Figure 6.2
Means of Travel to Work for
Workers 16 years and Over: 1990



Woodlake/ Briar Meadow, Medical Center, Willow Meadows/ Willow Bend Area all have the lowest percentage of those who carpool, at 12%. In both 1990 and 2000, Lake Houston and Kingwood had among the lowest percentage of workers who carpooled to work.

The largest number of workers carpooling to work occurs in Alief, Sharpstown, and Northside/ Northline Super Neighborhood, each with over 4,500 such workers. Downtown, Clinton Park/ Fidelity and Medical Center Area have the fewest carpoolers.

Between 1990 and 2000, areas on the City's edges and especially the southwest experienced the largest increases in the number of workers carpooling to work. Sharpstown, Greater Fondren Southwest, and Greater Hobby Area saw the largest increases in this category. Super Neighborhoods that experienced decreases in the number of workers carpooling to work tend to be located inside Loop 610. Magnolia Park,

Chapter 6: Journey to Work

Greater Heights and Memorial Park/ Washington Avenue saw the largest declines in this category.

The majority of carpoolers are in 2-person carpools (70%) and the remainder is evenly split between 3-person carpools and those with four or more. Super Neighborhoods with the largest numbers of 2 and 3-person carpools are found in the southwest. Larger carpools (4+ workers) are scattered around the City with the most in Northside/ Northline.

Since 1990 the percentage of carpoolers in larger carpools (3 or more) grew from 24% to 30% of all carpoolers. High concentrations of workers in larger carpools are found in the eastern half of the City. In contrast, high concentrations of workers in 2-person carpools are found in areas extending west to the City's edge from Downtown, in the northwest, far southeast and far northeast.

Public Transit

Citywide, 6% of workers travel to work by public transit. Both in 1990 and 2000, highest concentrations are found in the areas immediately surrounding Downtown, especially to the east within Loop 610 where transit-dependent neighborhoods such as Third Ward, Northside Village and others are located. Large changes occurred in areas like Midtown, with 27% of its workers using public transit in 2000, compared to 21% in 1990 and Downtown, which increased, to 20% in 2000 from 12% in 1990. Areas with less than 3% of workers using transit to travel to work are generally at the periphery of the City. Some

Super Neighborhoods closer to the central city such as Greenway/ Upper Kirby, Afton Oaks/ River Oaks, and University Place also have a low percentage of its workers using public transit to get to work.

Both in 1990 and 2000, the largest number of workers using public transit was in the southwestern part of the City. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of workers using public transit declined by 2,360. Most areas within the City experienced declines in this category except for the southwest, where it increased. This increase is likely due to a combination of population growth and the fact that large portions of the population have low incomes and may not be able to afford a vehicle.

Other Means

In both 1990 and 2000, only 4% of the workers traveled to work by motorcycle, bicycle, walking or other means.

Motorcyclists constitute a negligible proportion of workers in most areas. The largest proportion of workers bicycling is generally found inside Loop 610 and immediately adjacent to Downtown or the Medical Center. Outside Loop 610, Spring Branch West and Spring Branch Center have 1% of its workers in this category. The largest number of workers that traveled to work by bicycle was in Montrose followed by Sharpstown, each with over 300 such workers. Between 1990 and 2000, the Medical Center Super Neighborhood went from having 0 people commuting by bicycle to 4%, the highest rate in the City. Overall, the number of Super Neighborhoods with 1% or more

Chapter 6: Journey to Work

traveling by bicycle increased from 6 to 13 between 1990 and 2000.

In 1990 and 2000, citywide, only 2% of workers walk to work. People walking to work make up larger percentages (5% or more) close to Downtown (19%) or the Medical Center (20%). However, in both the Downtown and Medical Center percentages were down from 1990. In terms of numbers, more workers in Sharpstown and Gulfton walk to work than any other area. Spring Branch and Willowbrook have unusually high percentages (5% and 6%) in this category considering they are both far from the central city.

Work at Home

Across the City, just 2% of workers work from home. They are most concentrated in Downtown (almost 10%) followed by Afton Oaks and University Place, with 6% each. In 1990, Midtown had the highest percentage at almost 7%, while in 2000, Downtown had the highest percentage in this category at almost 10%. The largest number of workers working at home is in Greater Uptown and Memorial, each with over 1,000 such workers. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of workers working from home increased by 19,706. Eldridge/ West Oaks and Kingwood experienced the largest increases; Alief and Gulfton experienced declines in the number of workers working at home.

Table 6.1

Means of Transportation to Work for Workers 16 years and Older: 1990 & 2000

Mode of Travel

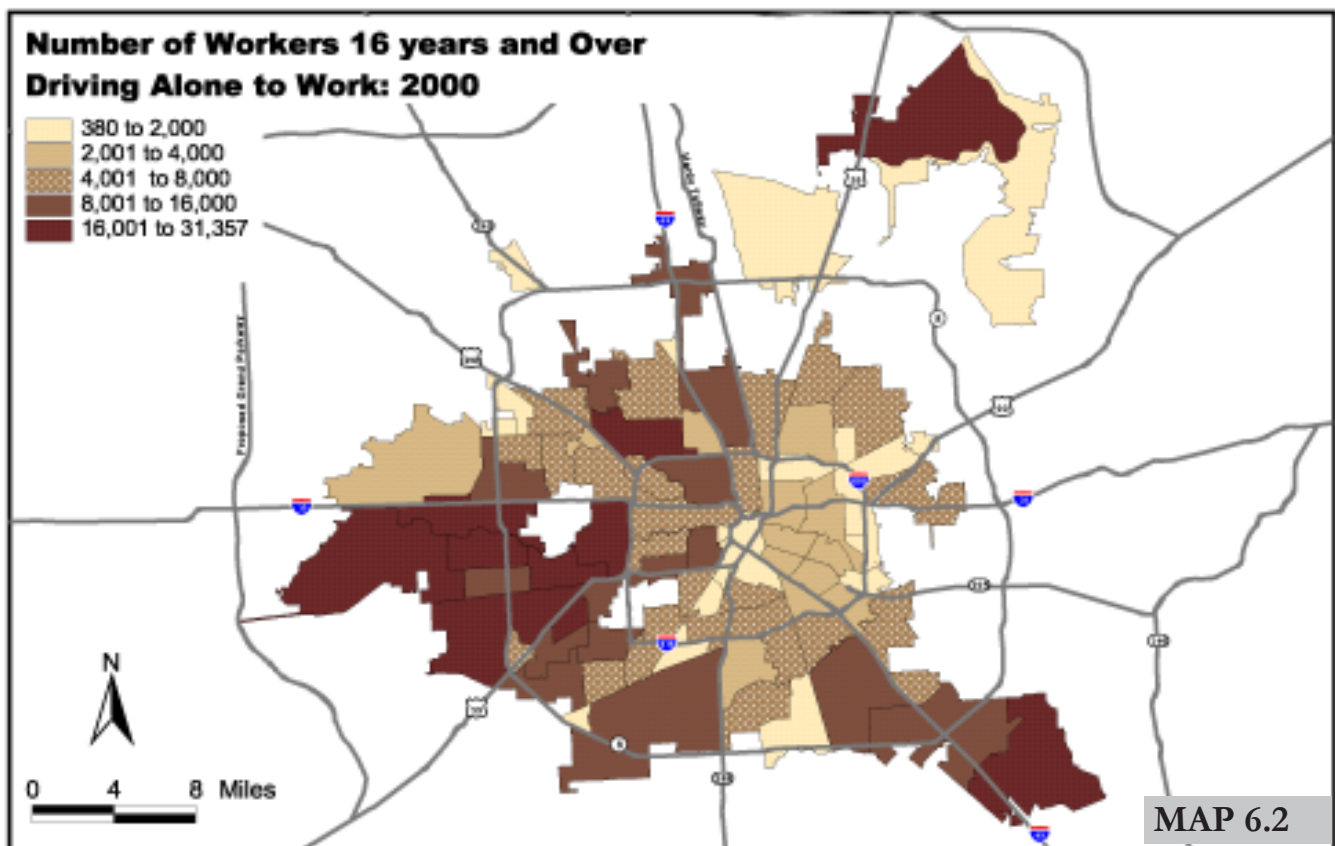
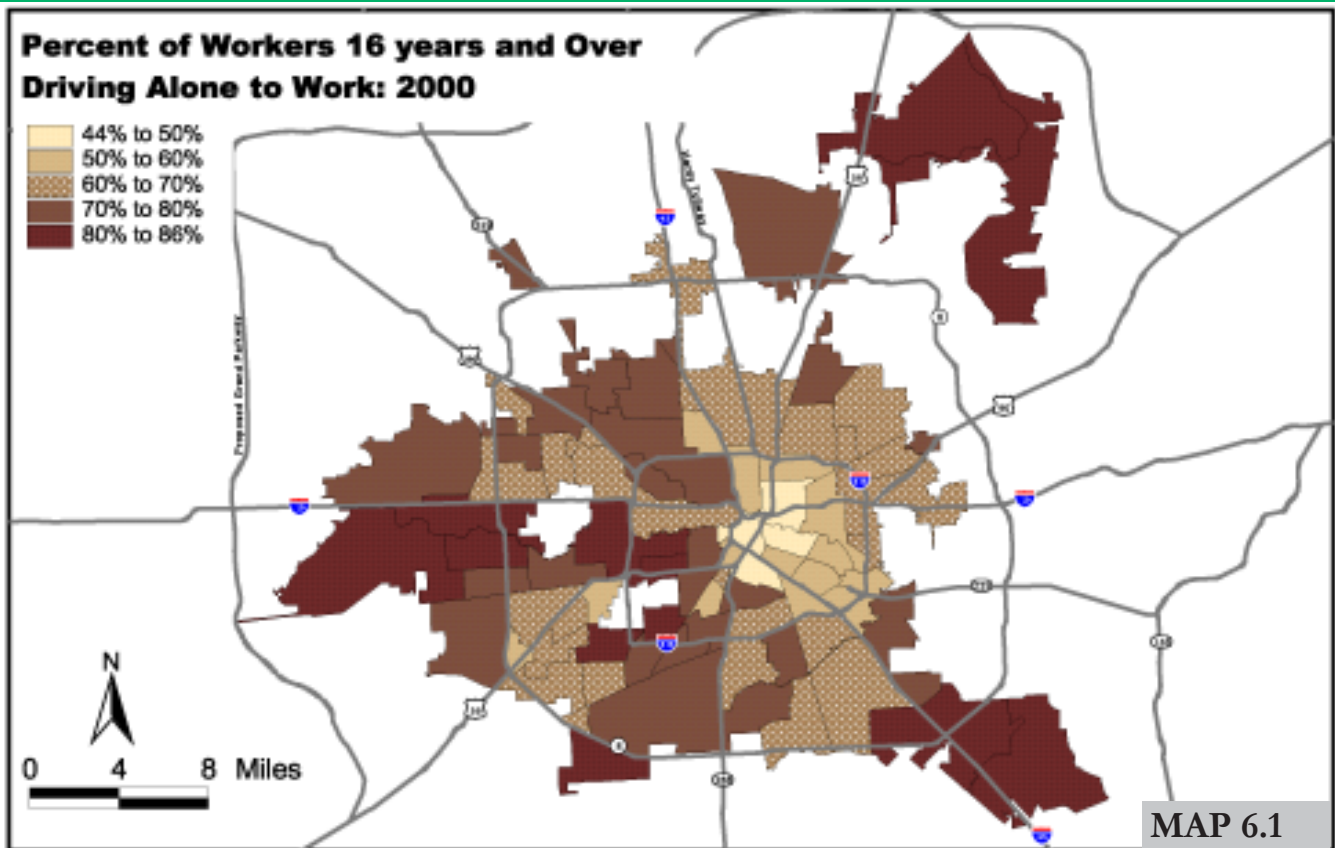
	Households		% of total	
	2000	1990	2000	1990
Drive alone	604,686	586,874	71.8%	72.3%
Carpool	133,983	124,358	15.9%	15.3%
Public Transportation	49,434	51,794	5.9%	6.4%
Walk, Bike, Motorcycle, Other	33,870	33,028	4.0%	4.1%
Work from home	19,706	16,060	2.3%	2.0%
City of Houston	841,679	812,114	100.0%	100.0%

Means of Transportation to Work for Workers 16 years and Older: 1990 & 2000

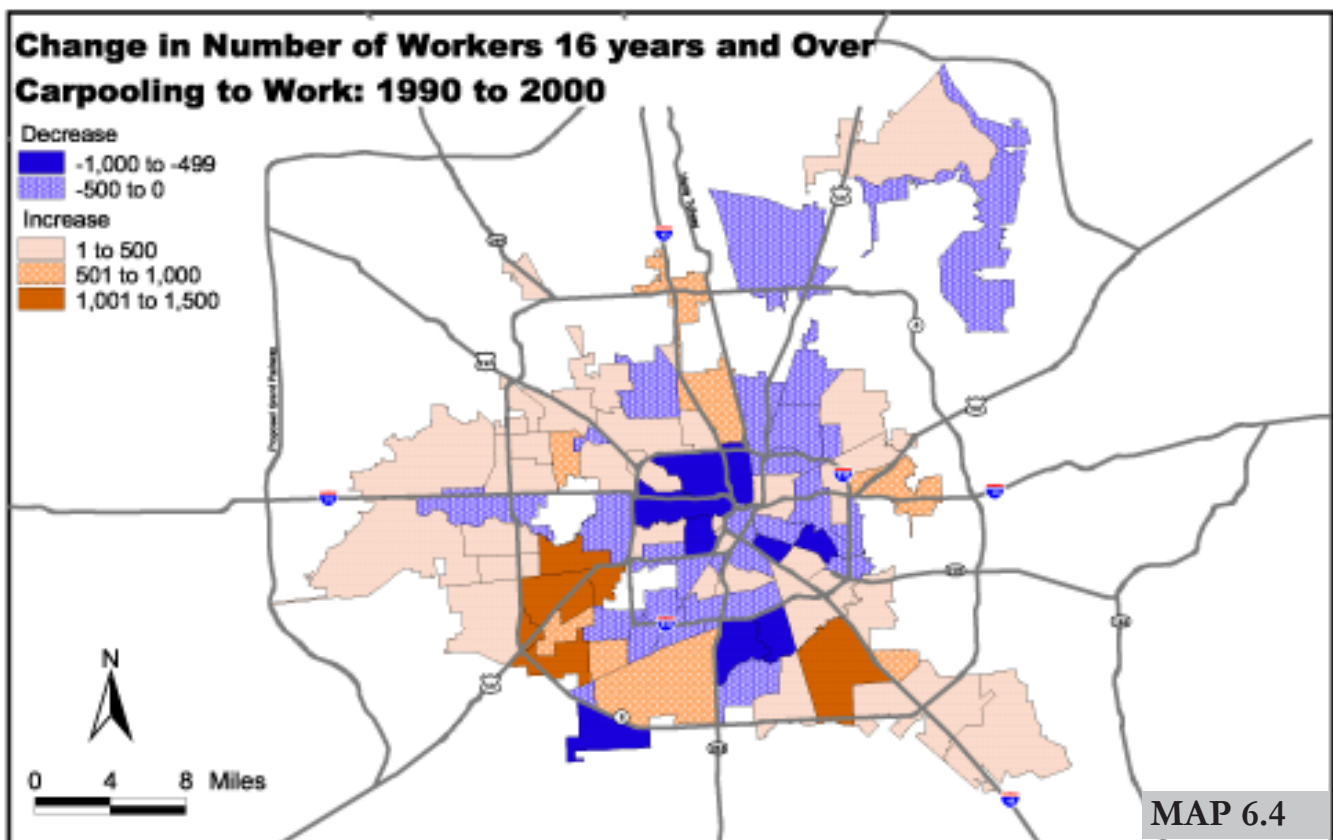
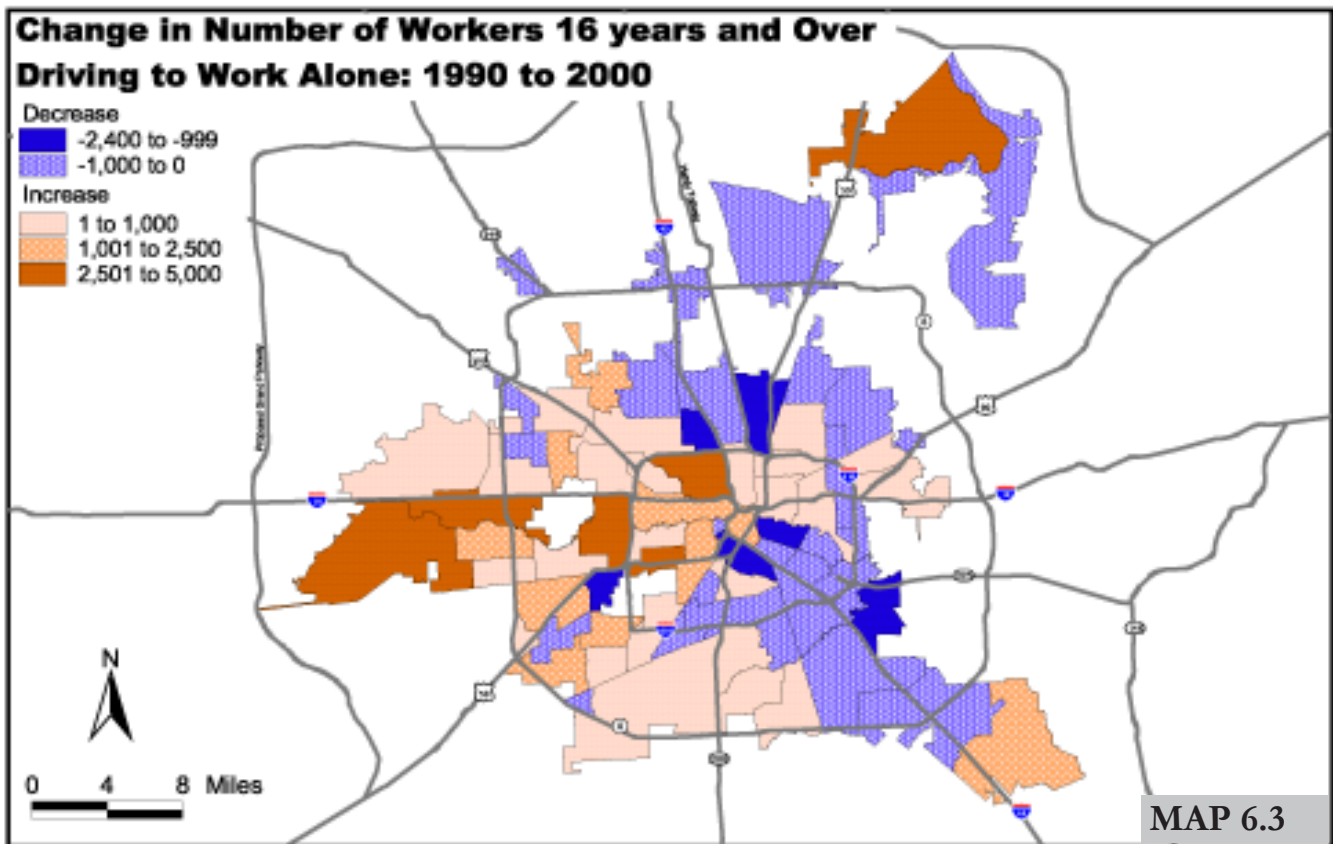
Change in Mode of Travel

	Households		#	%
	2000	1990	change	change
Drive alone	604,686	586,874	17,812	3.0%
Carpool	133,983	124,358	9,625	7.7%
Public Transportation	49,434	51,794	(2,360)	-4.6%
Walk, Bike, Motorcycle, Other	33,870	33,028	842	2.5%
Work from home	19,706	16,060	3,646	22.7%
City of Houston	841,686	812,441	29,245	3.6%

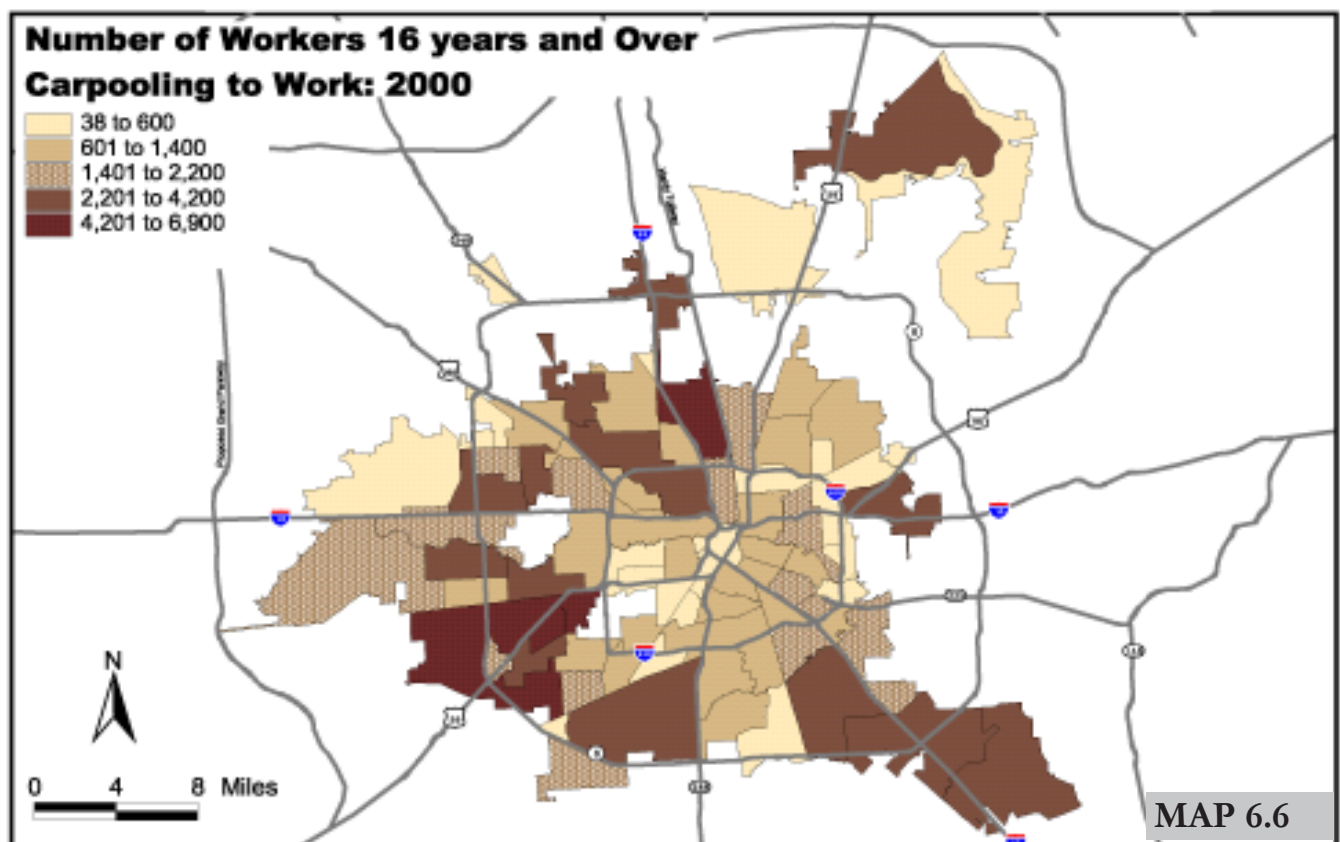
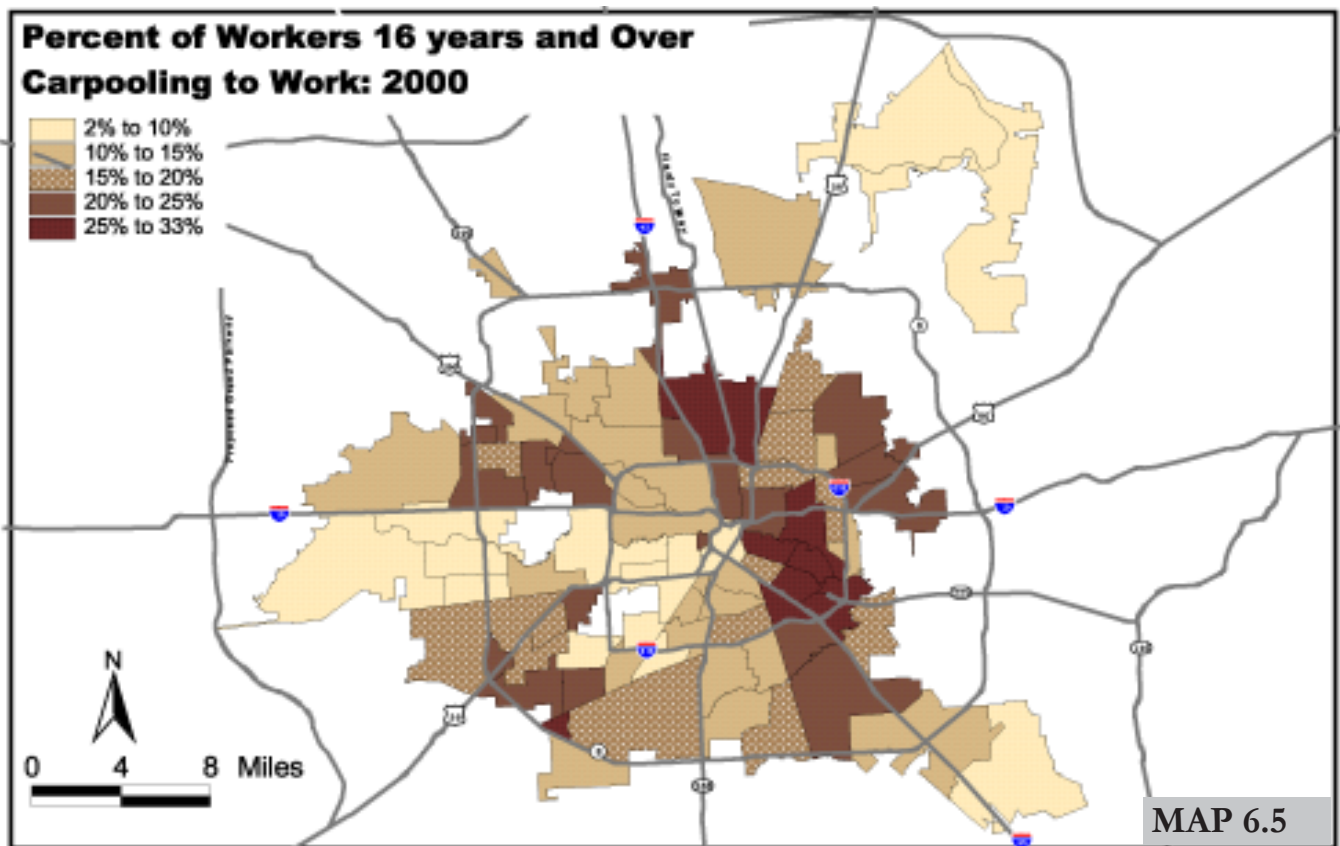
Chapter 6: Journey to Work



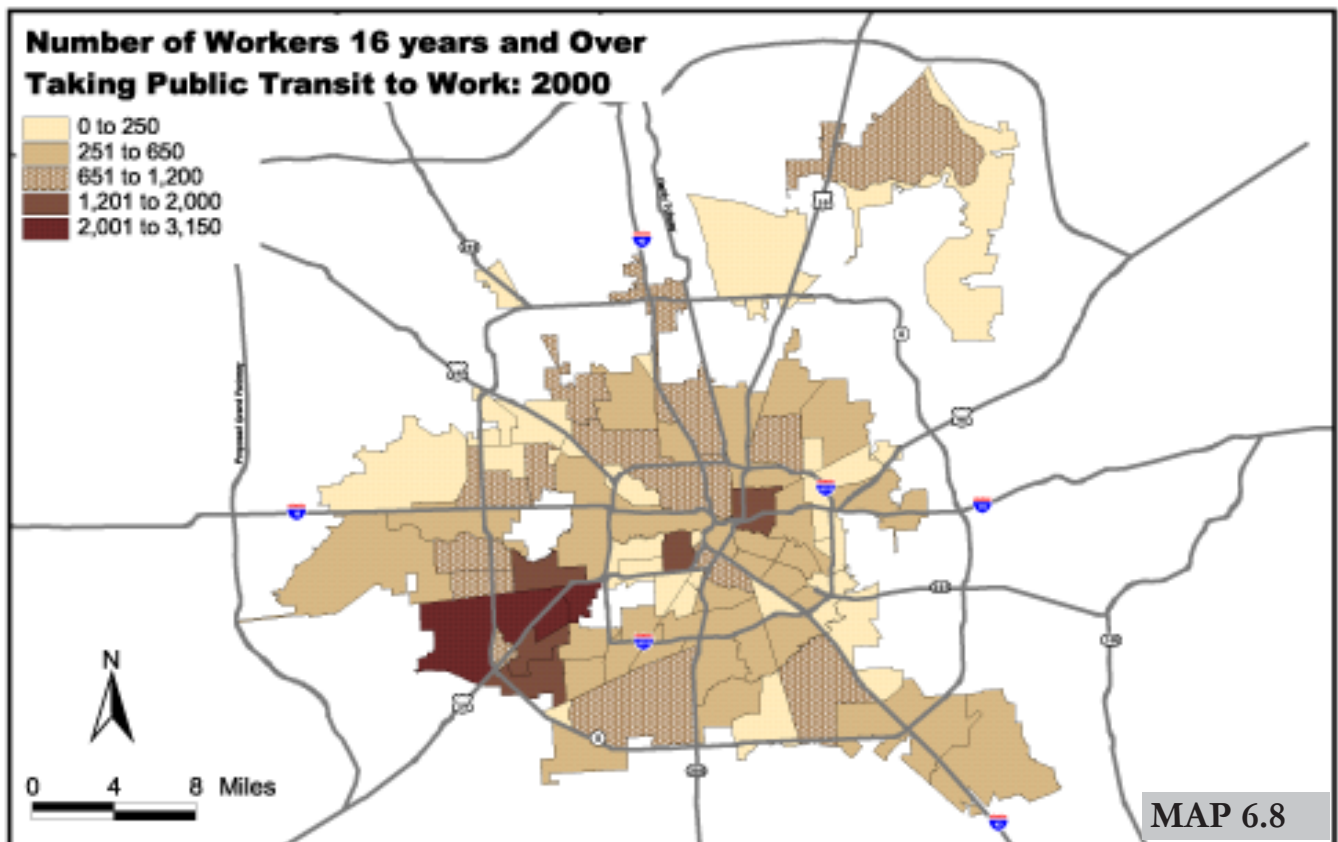
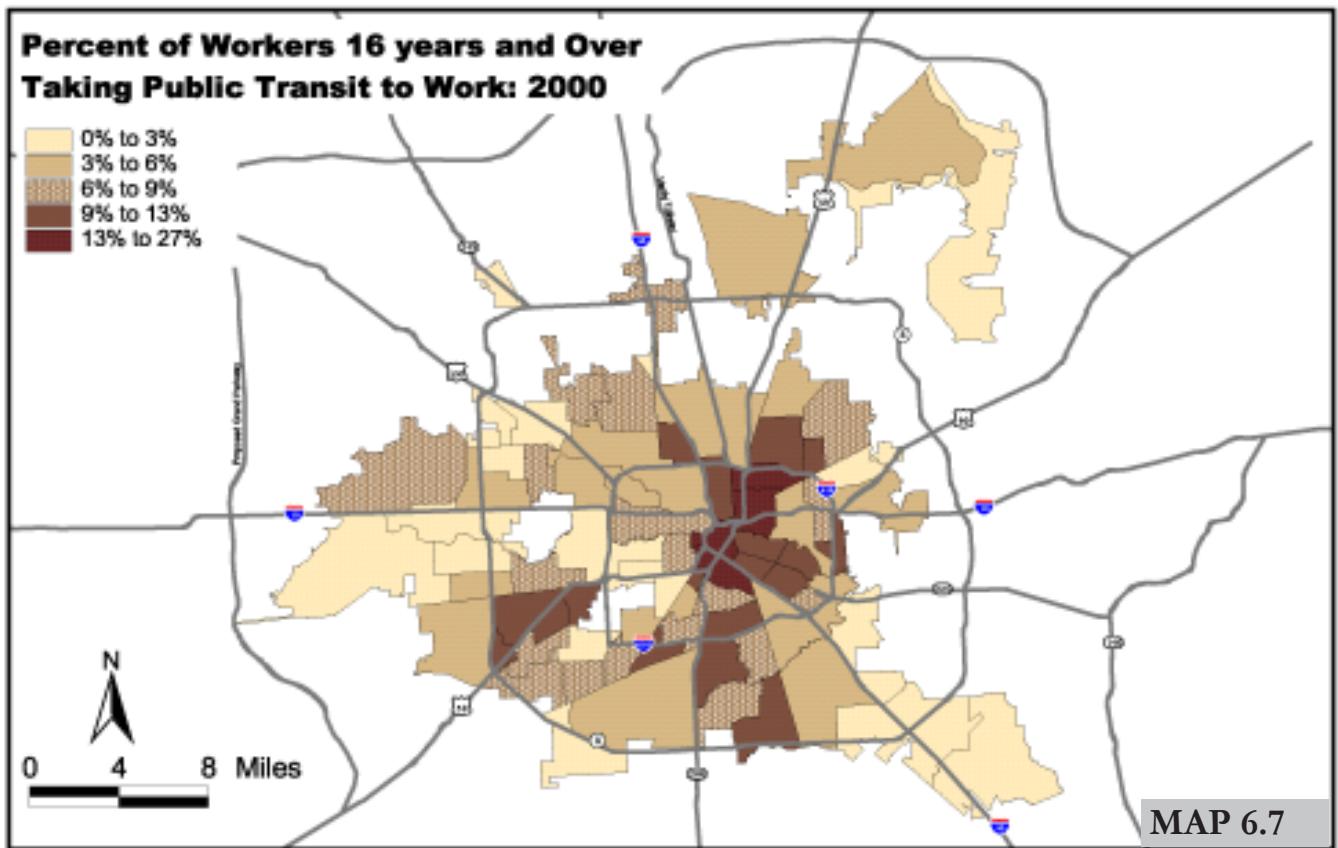
Chapter 6: Journey to Work



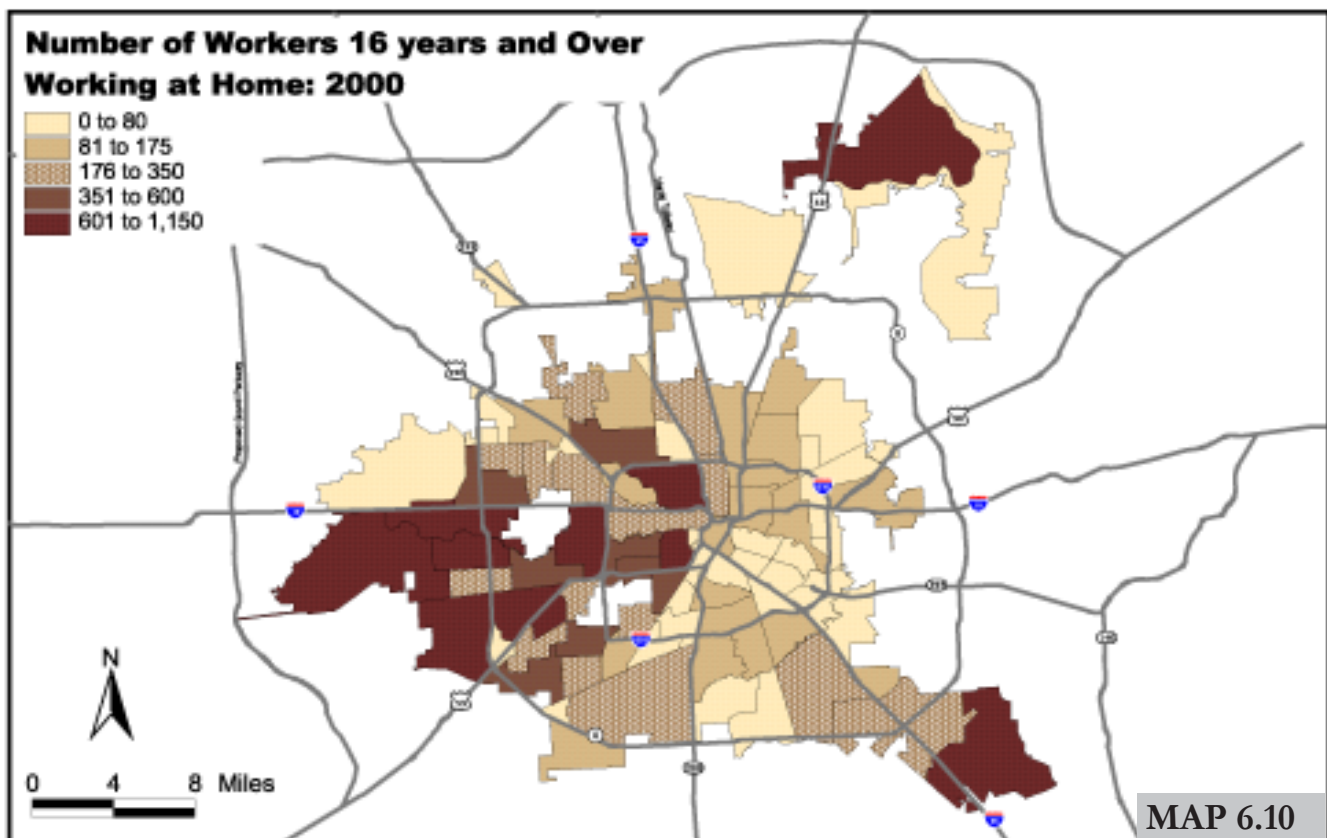
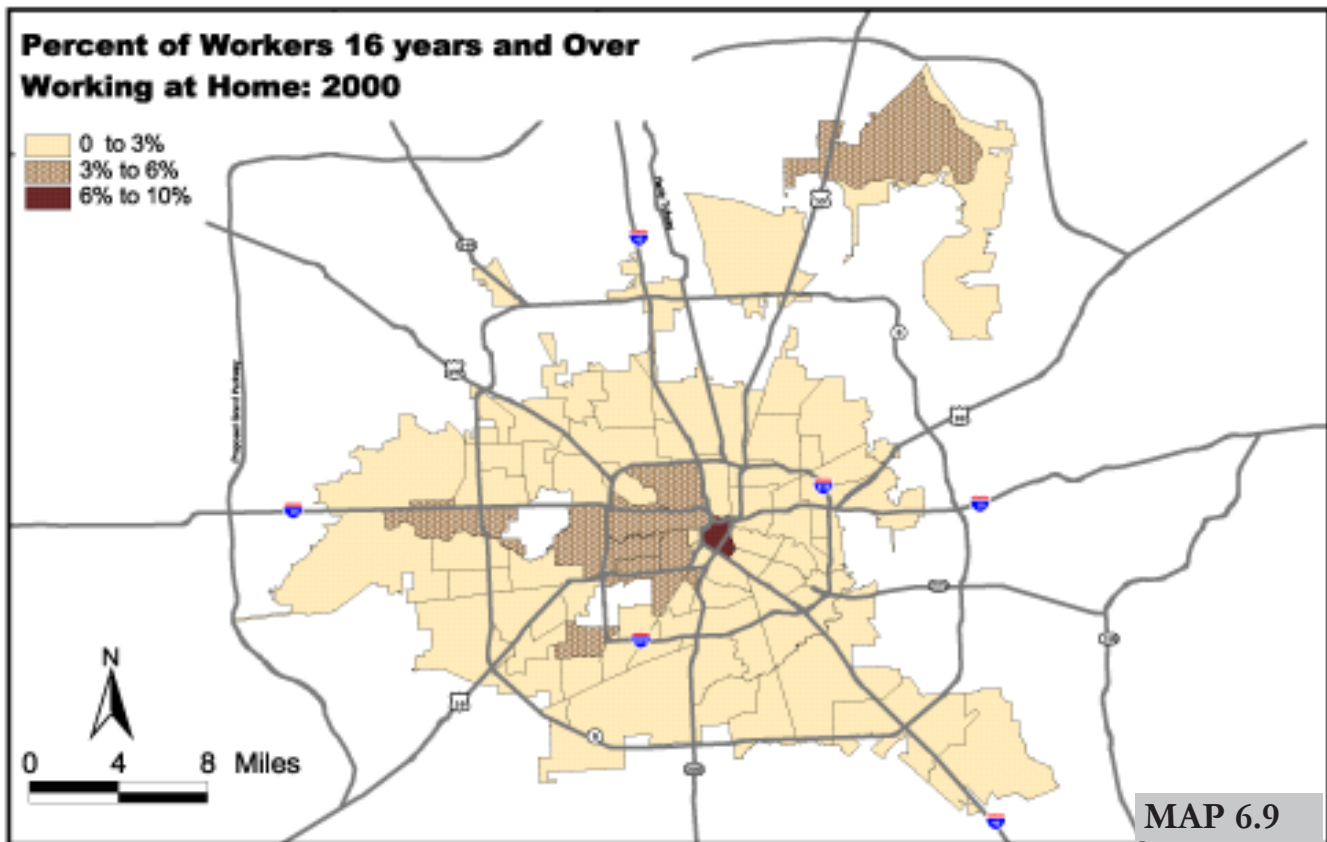
Chapter 6: Journey to Work



Chapter 6: Journey to Work



Chapter 6: Journey to Work



Chapter 6: Journey to Work

TRAVEL TIME TO WORK

The U.S Census Bureau collects data on how long it takes for workers that do not work at home to travel from their place of residence to place of work. This figure includes time spent waiting for carpools and public transit.

In both 1990 and 2000, more than half of workers spent less than 30 minutes getting to work. Commute times grew somewhat longer evidenced by the fact that during this time the percentage spending less than 30 minutes fell from 61% to 59% of all workers. Most commuters who spend 30 minutes or less are located inside Loop 610 and those that spend the most time commuting are located at the City's edges. However, a number of low-income Super Neighborhoods close to Downtown are exceptions to this pattern.

Workers in these areas have long commute times and use public transit. These Super Neighborhoods are Second Ward, Third Ward, Fourth Ward, Fifth Ward, Binz and Near Northside. Other areas somewhat farther from Downtown such as Sharpstown and Gulfton have similar characteristics to these Super Neighborhoods. In these Super Neighborhoods substantial numbers of workers spend an hour or more on their commute despite the fact that they do not live at the City's edge.

Table 6.2

Travel Time to Work, 16+ Years and Older

	Workers		% of Total	
	2000	1990	2000	1990
Less Than 30 Minutes	477,348	486,146	58.1%	61.0%
30 to 60 minutes	282,663	263,893	34.4%	33.1%
60 Minutes or More	61,969	47,574	7.5%	6.0%
Total	821,980	797,613	100.0%	100.0%

Change in Travel Time to Work, 16+ Years and Older

	Workers		#	%
	2000	1990	change	change
Less Than 30 Minutes	477,348	486,146	-8,798	-1.8%
30 to 60 minutes	282,663	263,893	18,770	7.1%
60 Minutes or More	61,969	47,574	14,395	30.3%
Total	823,980	799,603	24,377	3.0%

Chapter 6: Journey to Work

Figure 6.3
Travel Time to Work for Workers
16 Years and Older: 2000

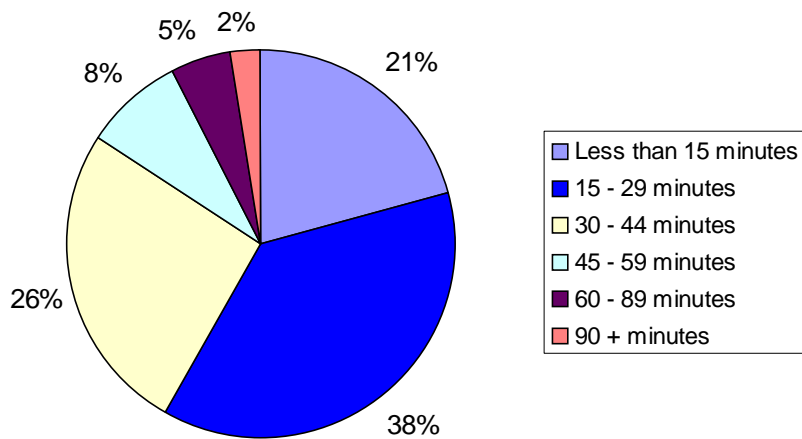
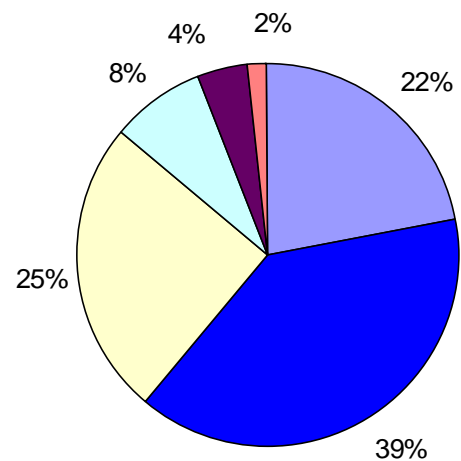
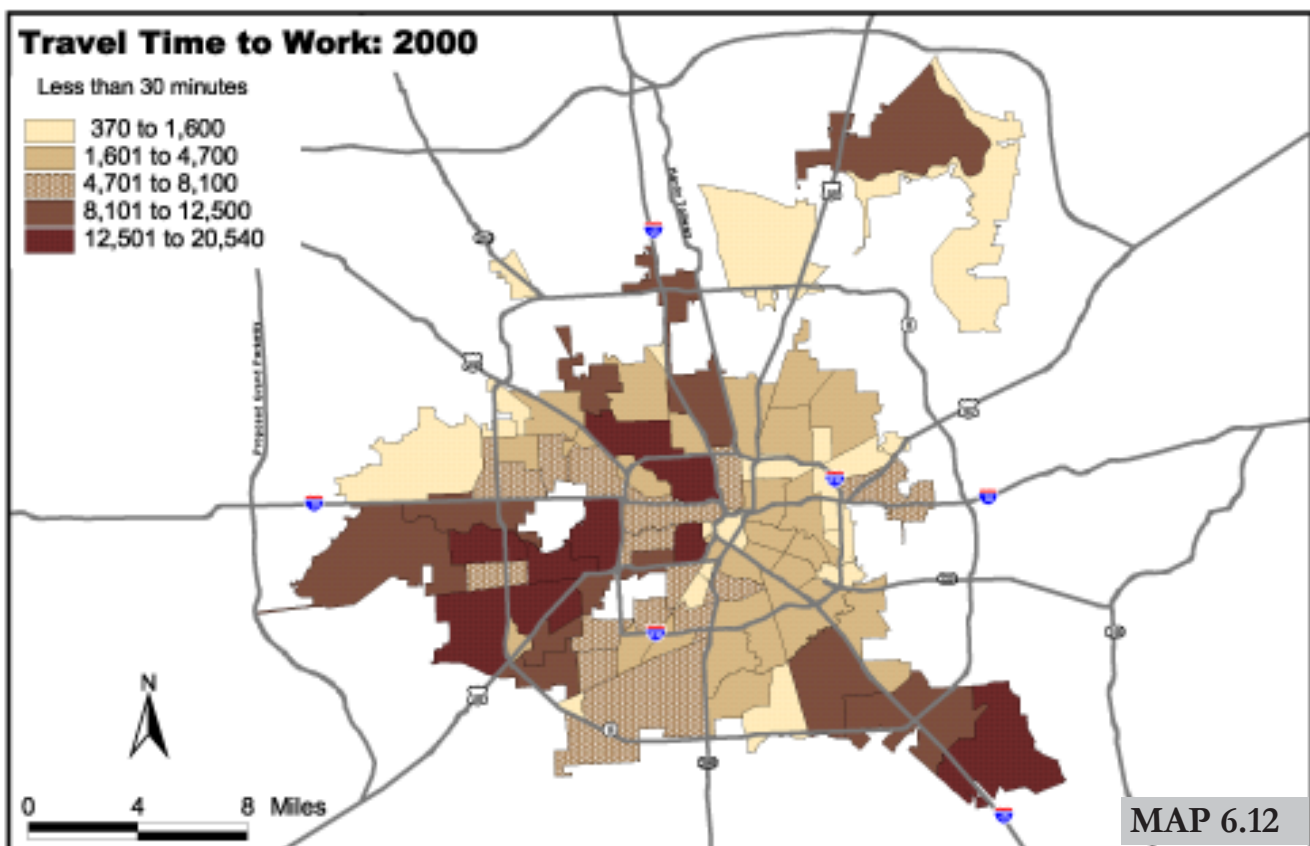
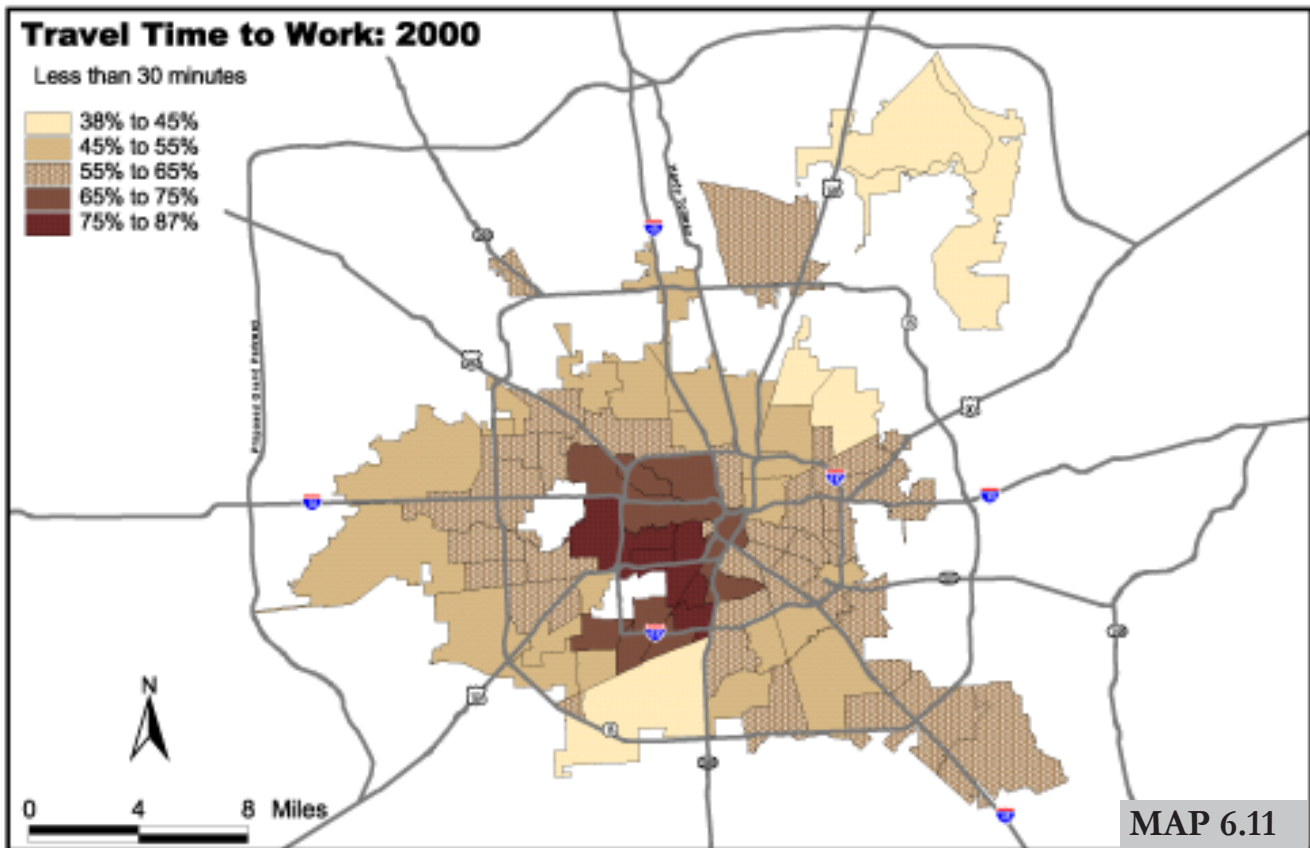


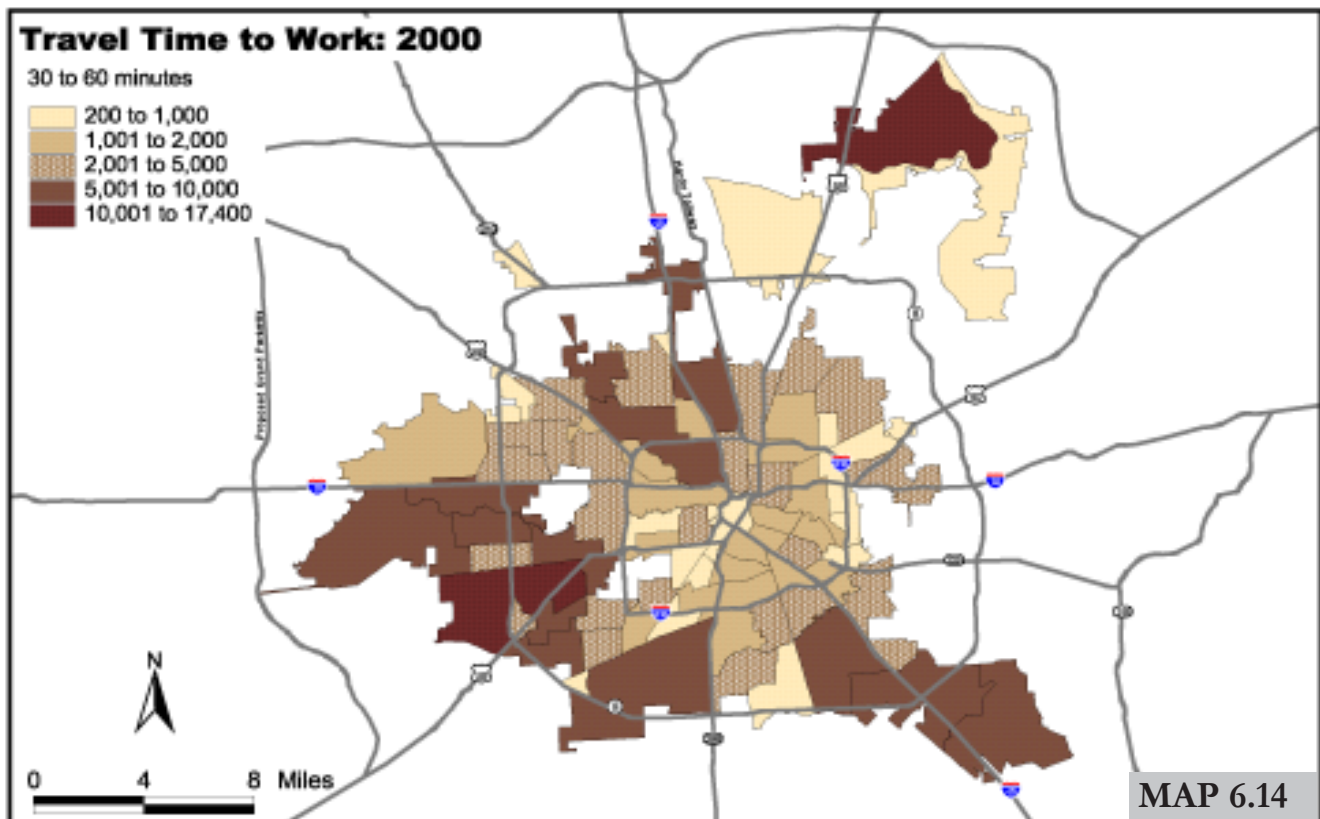
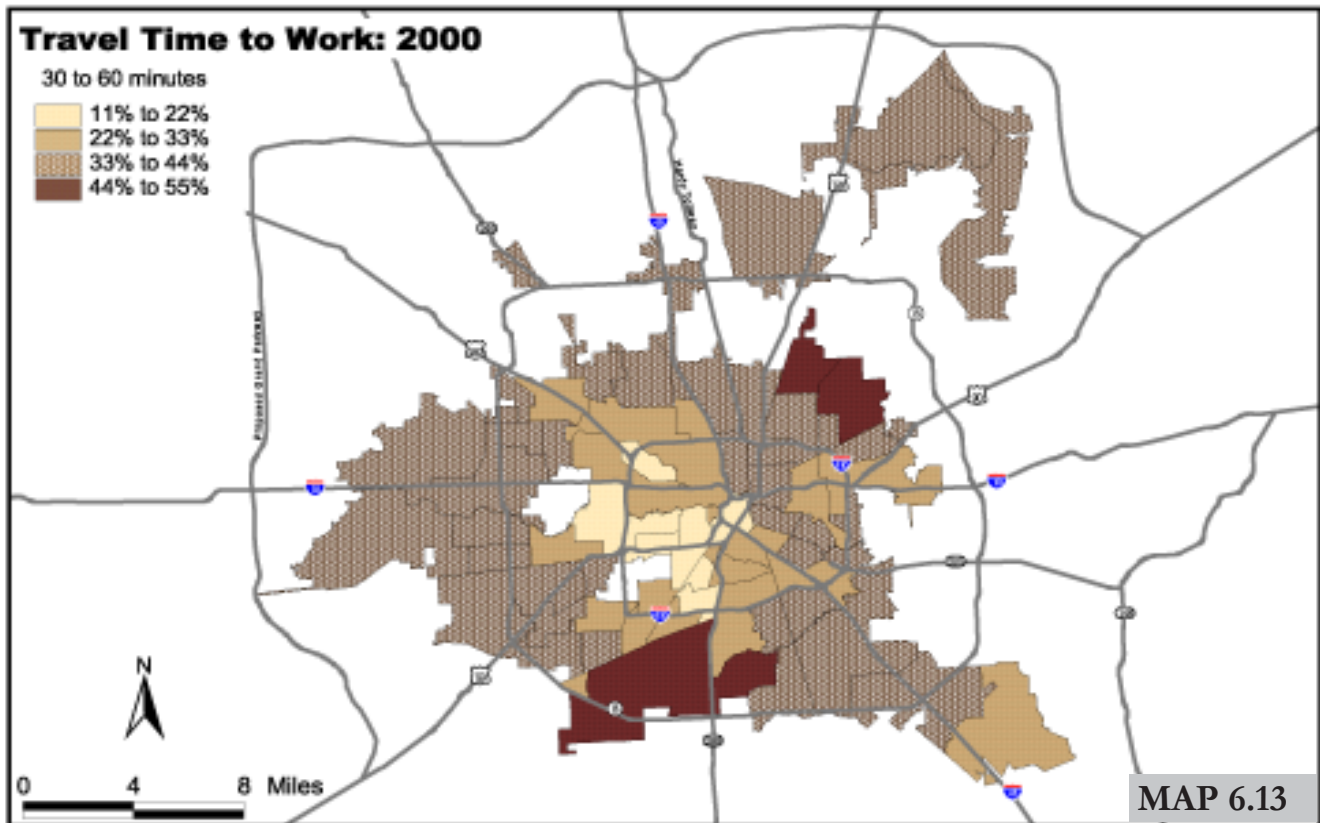
Figure 6.4
Travel Time to Work for Workers
16 Years and Older: 1990



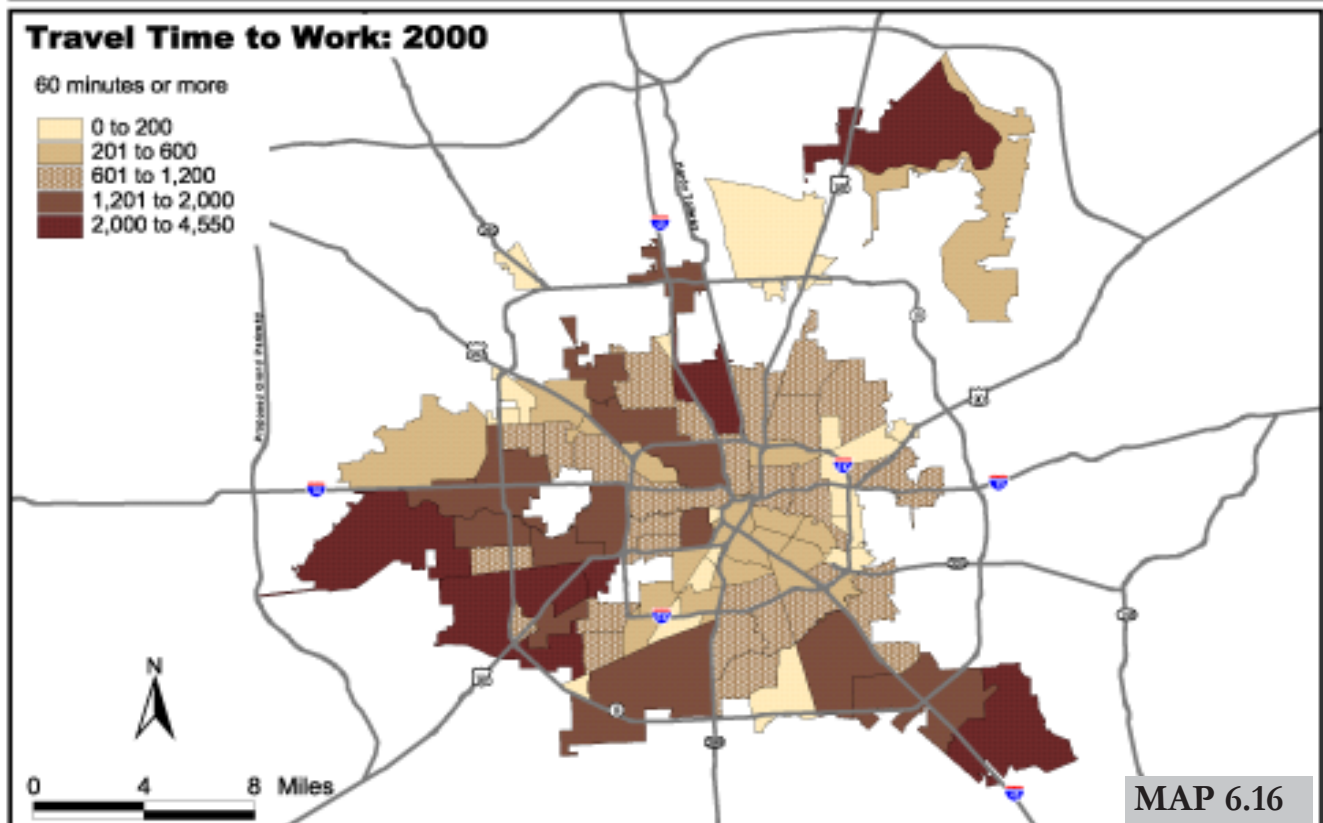
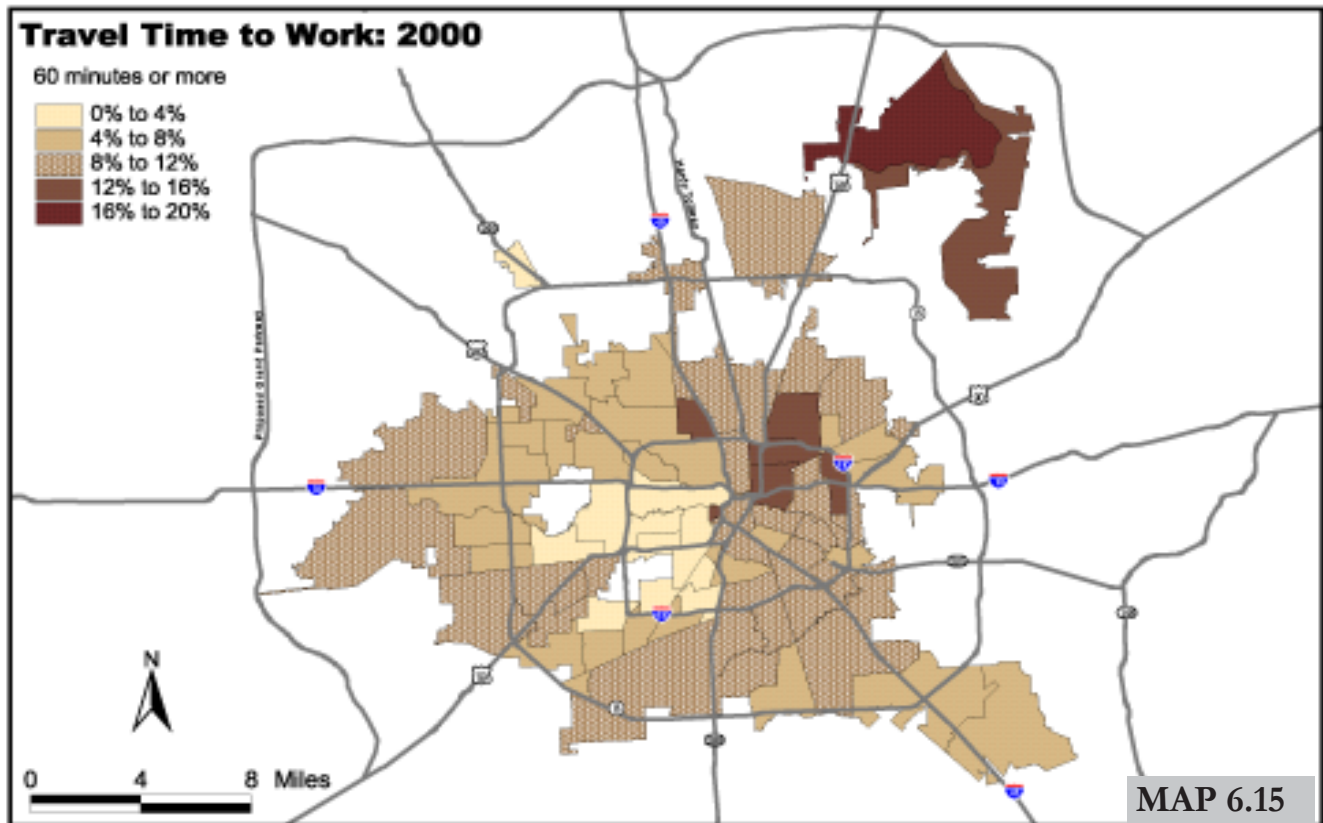
Chapter 6: Journey to Work



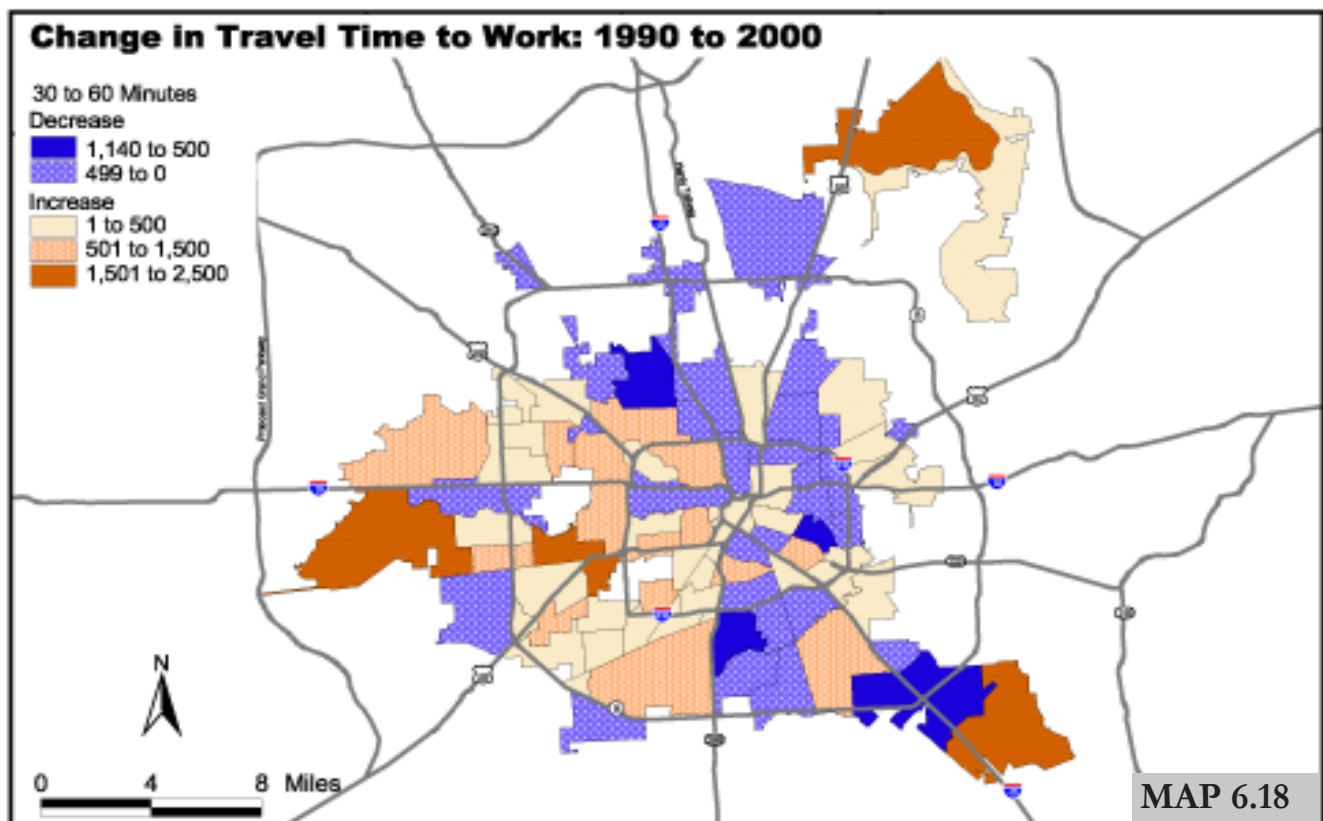
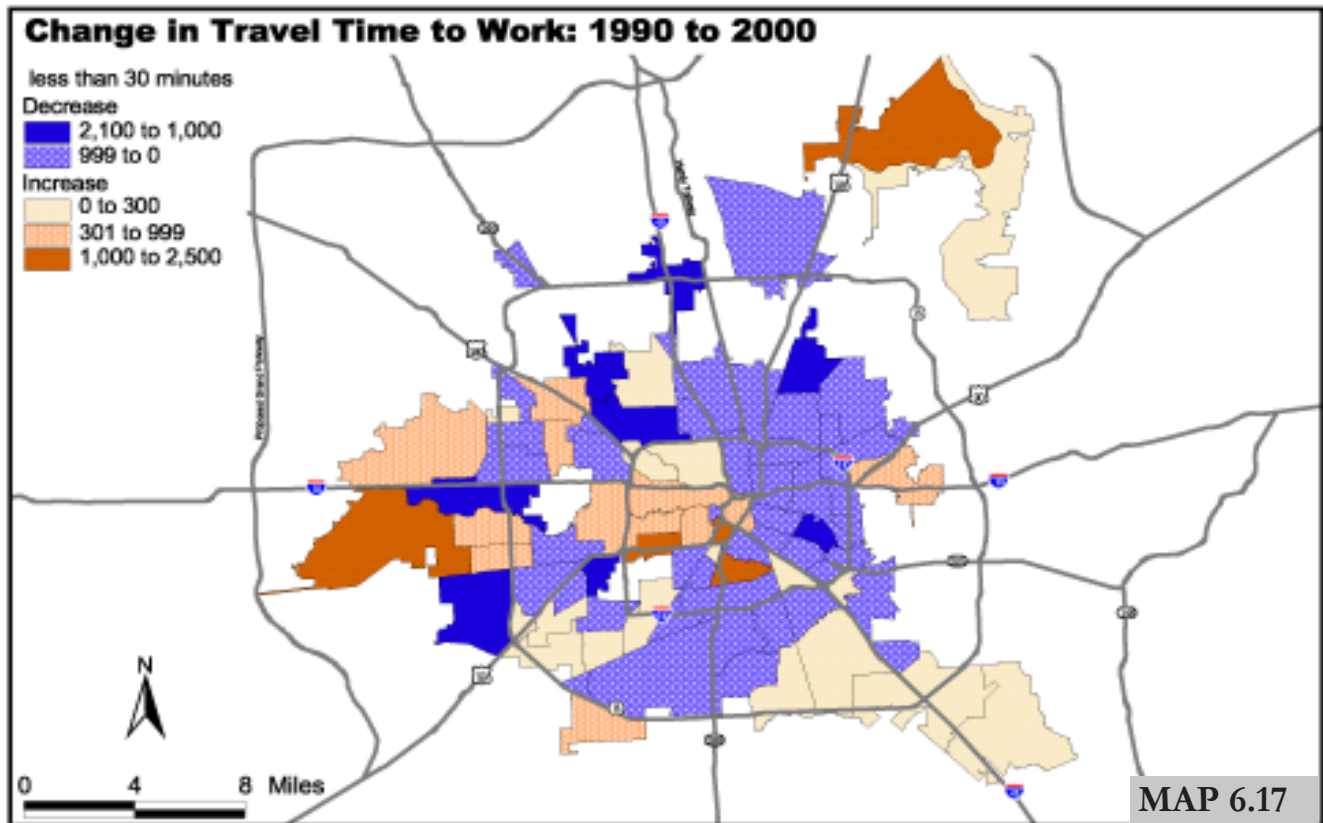
Chapter 6: Journey to Work



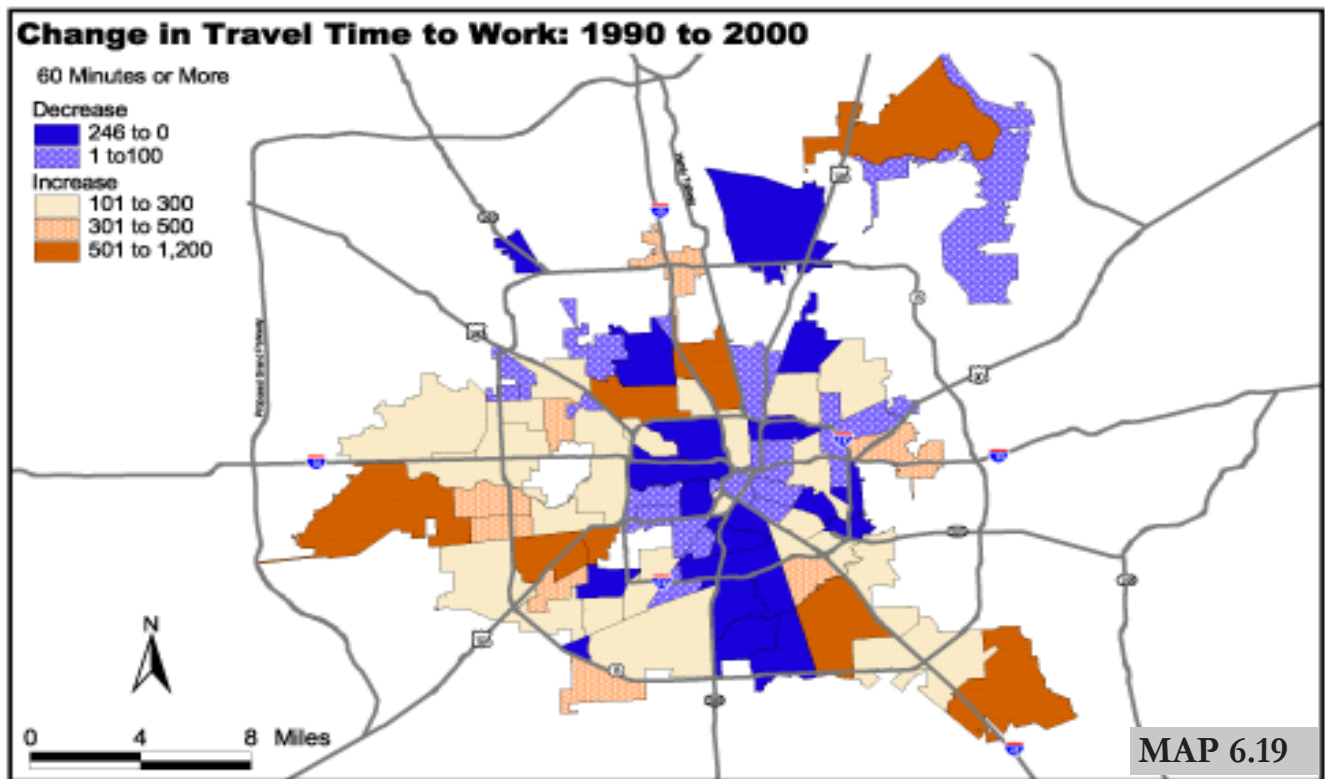
Chapter 6: Journey to Work



Chapter 6: Journey to Work



Chapter 6: Journey to Work



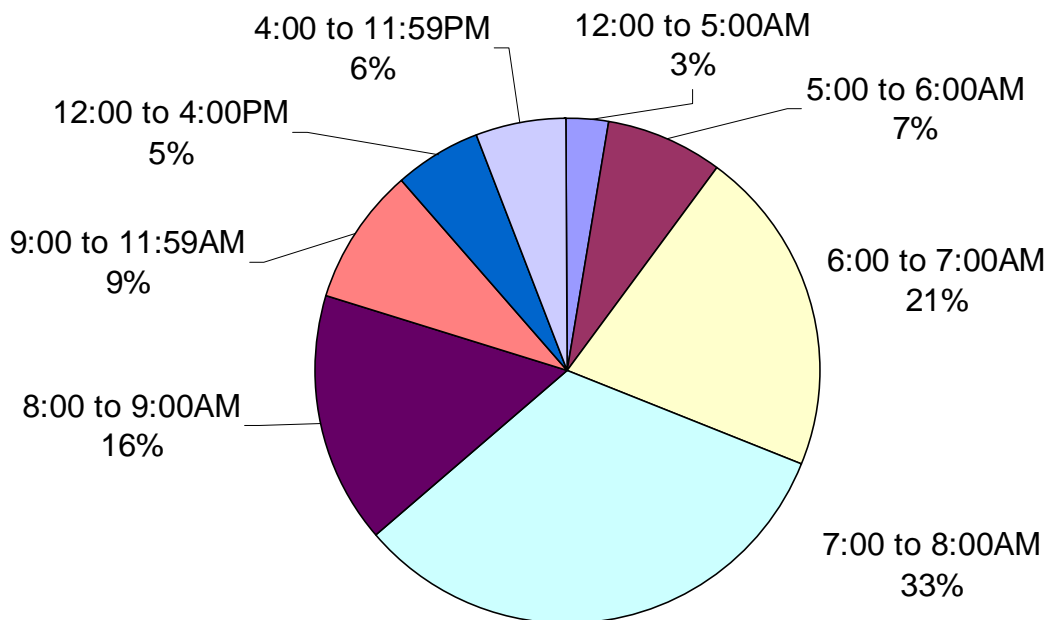
Chapter 6: Journey to Work

TIME LEAVING HOME TO GO TO WORK FOR WORKERS 16 YEARS AND OVER

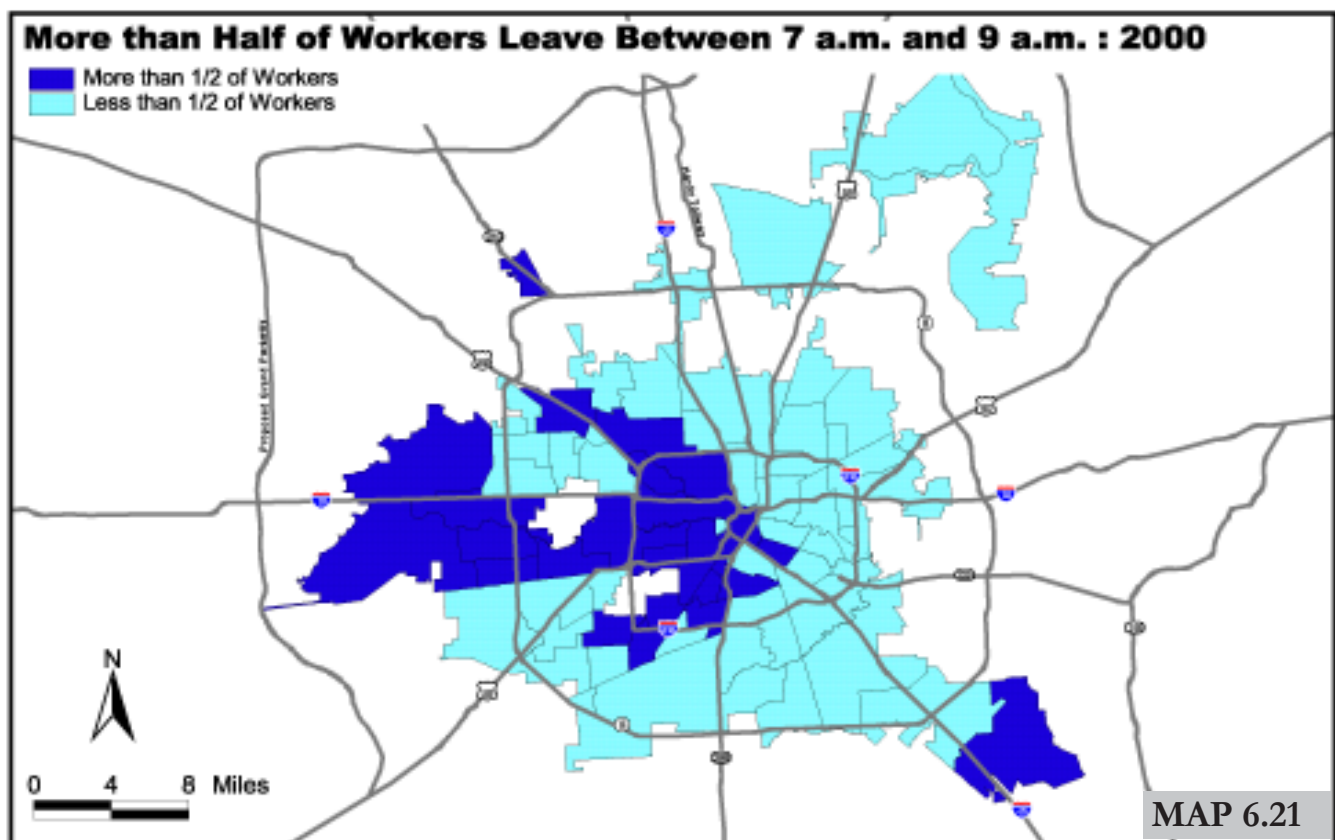
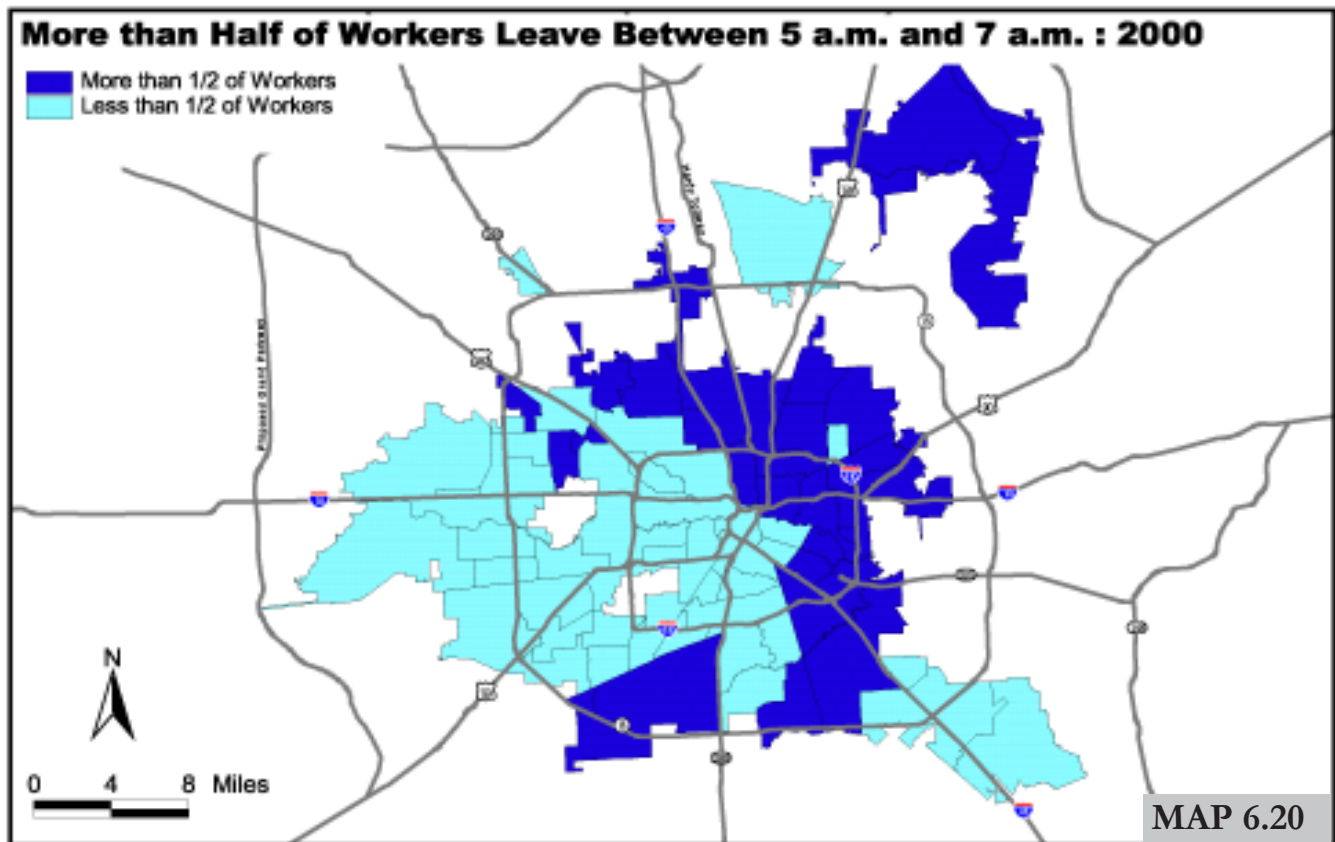
In 2000, the Census collected information on what time workers leave home to go to work. This information can provide insights on transportation issues such as long commute times, or areas with large numbers of workers with non-traditional work schedules. In 2000, more than half all workers 16+ years leave home for work between 6 and 7:59 a.m. The smallest percentage (3%) leaves between 12:00

a.m. and 4:59 a.m. In general, higher percentages of workers to the east of Downtown leave earlier, while higher percentages west of Downtown leave later. Workers leaving before 7:00 a.m. tend to be concentrated at the outer edges of the City or east of Downtown.

Figure 6.5
Time Leaving Home to Go to Work: 2000



Chapter 6: Journey to Work



Chapter 6: Journey to Work

PRIVATE VEHICLE OCCUPANCY

The Census collects information related to transportation, among which are details on the size of carpools used by workers 16+ to get to work. This information is categorized based on whether there are one, two, three or four or more people in a carpool.

Citywide 16% of workers 16+ commuted to work by carpooling, up from 15% in 1990. The majority of carpoolers are in 2-person carpools (70%). This represents about 100,000 people. The remaining 40,000 people are split evenly between 3 person carpools and carpools of 4 persons or greater. Since 1990 the percentage of carpoolers in larger carpools increased.

Carpooled in 2-person Carpool

In 2000, 71% of carpoolers were in 2 person carpools, down from 77% in 1990. Overall, the number of workers in this category declined slightly, by 762 workers or 1% since 1990.

Super Neighborhoods that experienced the largest increases were largely in the southwest while areas that experienced the largest decreases in this category were scattered around the City.

Despite these changes, the overall distribution of carpoolers commuting to work in 2 person carpools was very similar in 1990 and 2000. The largest numbers are in the southwest in Sharpstown and Alief. Super Neighborhoods with fewer workers are located south of Downtown inside Loop 610 or and scattered throughout the rest of the City.

Carpooled in 3-person Carpool

In 2000, 15% of carpoolers were in 3 person carpools, up from 13% of all carpoolers in 1990. This represented an increase of 3,848 carpoolers or 23% since 1990. Super Neighborhoods that experienced decreases were most common inside Loop 610 and to the northeast of Downtown. Areas outside Loop

Table 6.3
Private Vehicle Occupancy

	Persons		% of total	
	2000	1990	2000	1990
Persons in 2-Person Carpools	94,209	94,971	70.3%	76.4%
Persons in 3-Person Carpools	20,480	16,632	15.3%	13.4%
Persons in 4+ Person Carpools	19,294	12,705	14.4%	10.2%
Total Persons Carpooling	133,983	124,308	100.0%	100.0%

Change in Private Vehicle Occupancy

	Persons		#	%
	2000	1990	change	change
Persons in 2-Person Carpools	94,209	94,971	(762)	-0.8%
Persons in 3-Person Carpools	20,480	16,632	3,848	23.1%
Persons in 4+ Person Carpools	19,294	12,705	6,589	51.9%
Total Persons Carpooling	133,983	124,308	9,675	7.8%

Chapter 6: Journey to Work

610, especially to the southwest experienced increases in the number of carpoolers in 3 person carpools.

In 1990 and 2000, the distribution of carpoolers in 3 person carpools was quite similar. Super Neighborhoods with larger numbers are found in the southwest and along adjacent to major highways. Areas with fewer carpoolers in this category were scattered around the City.

Carpooled in 4-person + Carpool

In 2000, 14% of carpoolers were in 4+ person carpools, up from 10% in 1990. This represented an additional 6,589 carpoolers in this category, or a 52% increase since 1990. Northside/ Northline (+496) and Greenspoint (+398) experienced the largest increase in the number of carpoolers in this category between

1990 and 2000. Areas to the far northeast and inside Loop 610 lost the most carpoolers in 4 person carpools.

In 1990, Northside/ Northline (714) had the most workers in 4-person + carpools followed by Greater Heights (542) and Super Neighborhoods to the southwest. By 2000, Northside/ Northline and the southwest had added carpoolers in this category, whereas Greater Heights declined somewhat. Areas with few carpoolers in larger, 4+ carpools, were scattered around the City in both 1990 and 2000.

Figure 6.7
Carpoolers by Number in Carpool: 2000

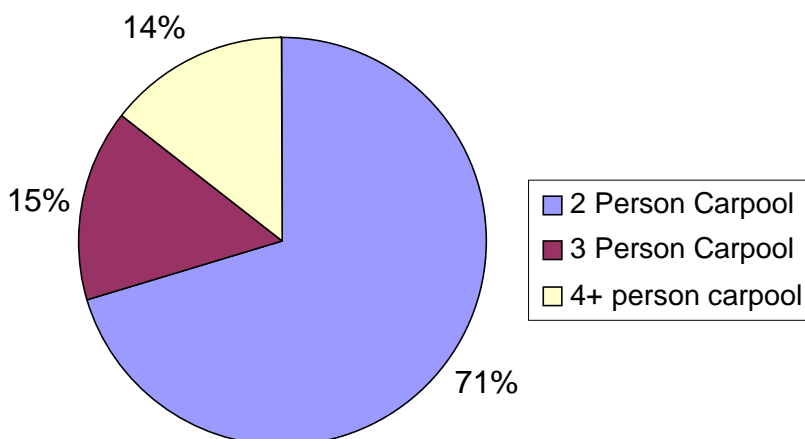
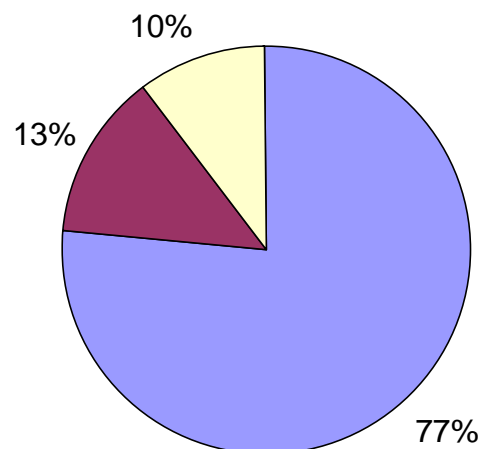
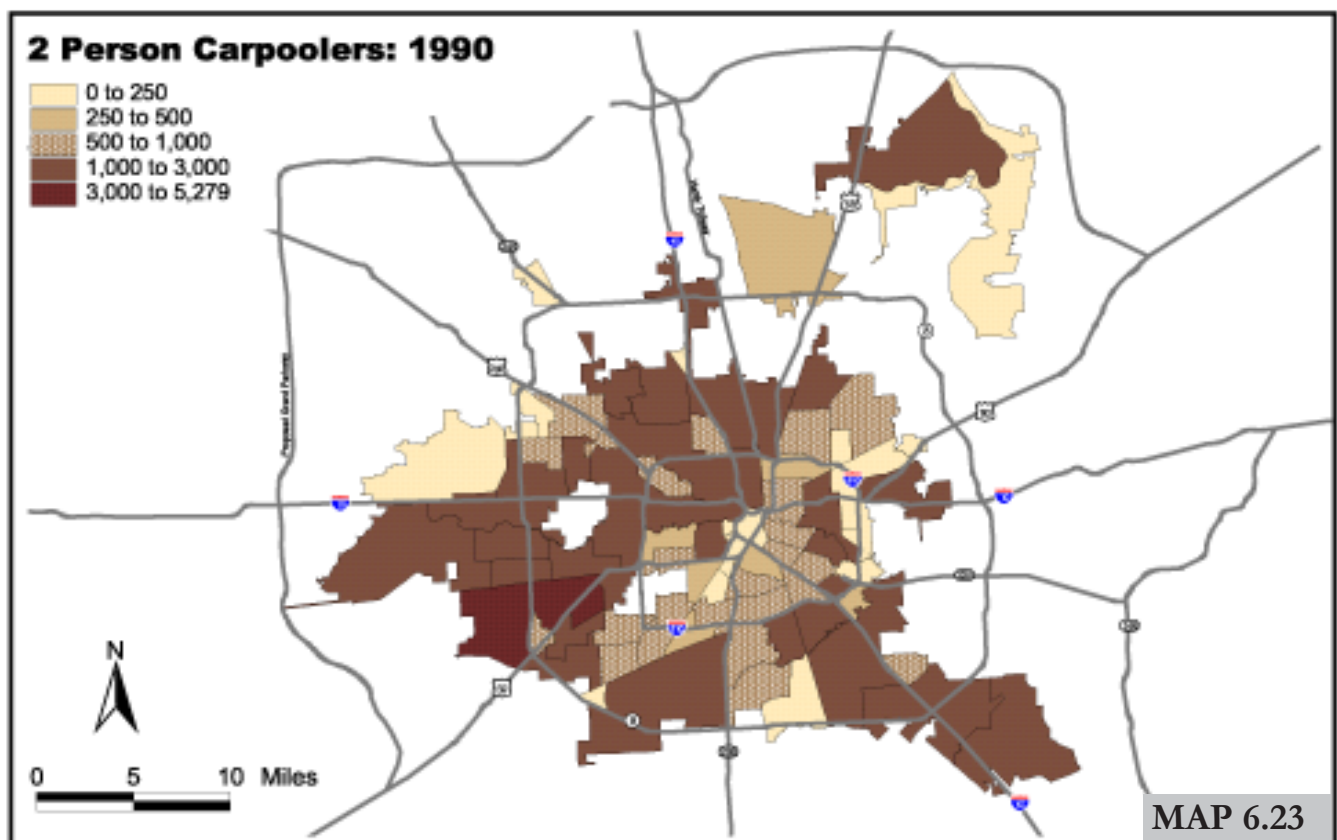
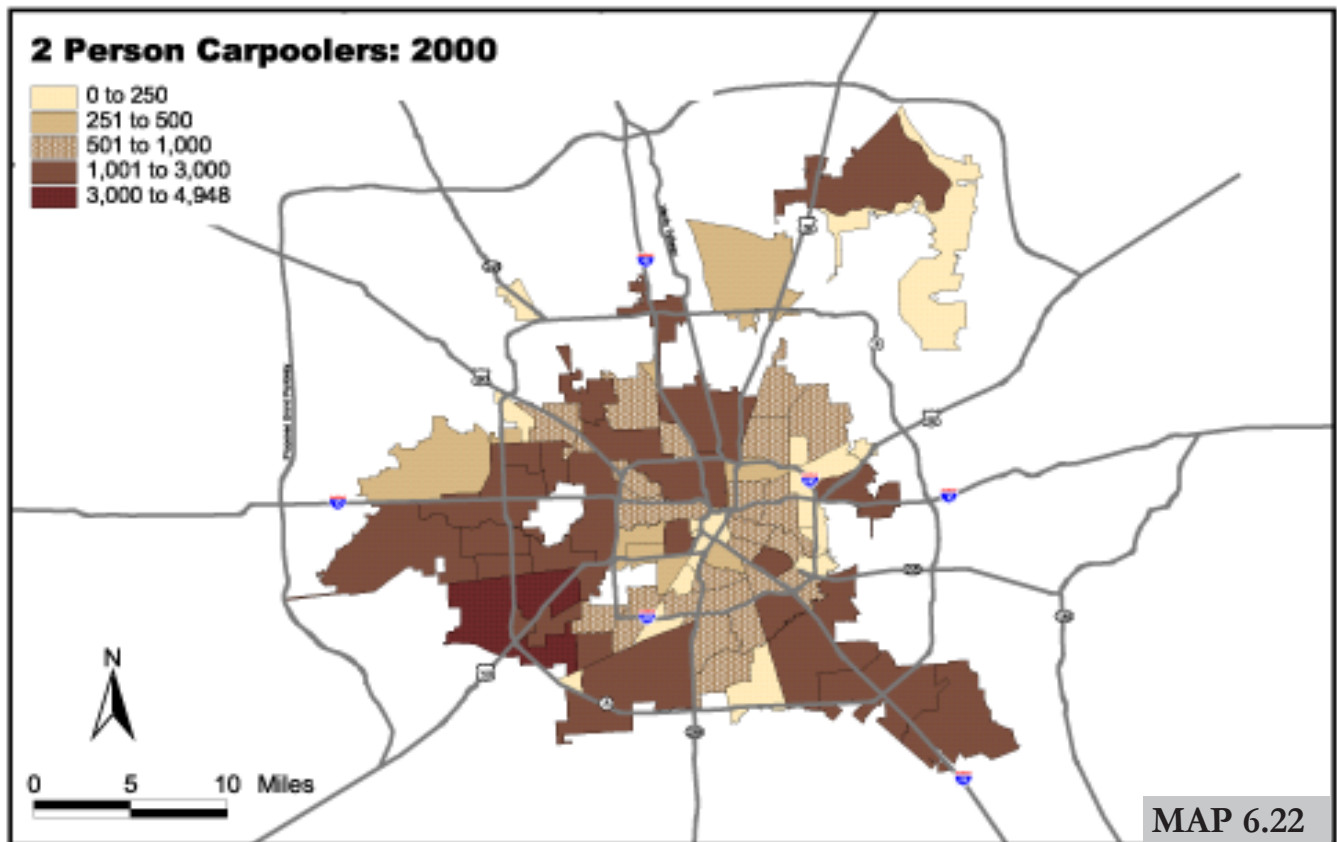


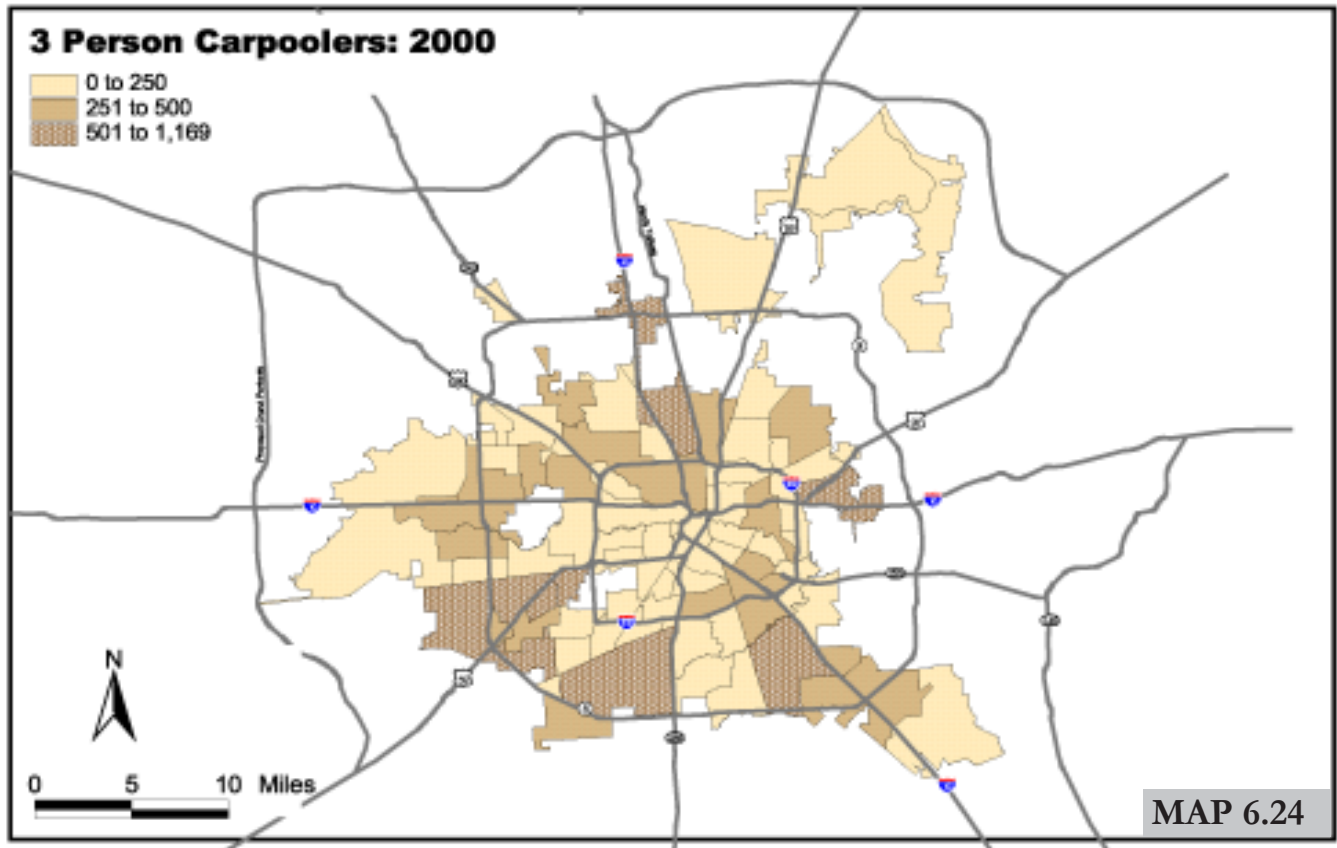
Figure 6.8
Carpoolers by Number in Carpool: 1990



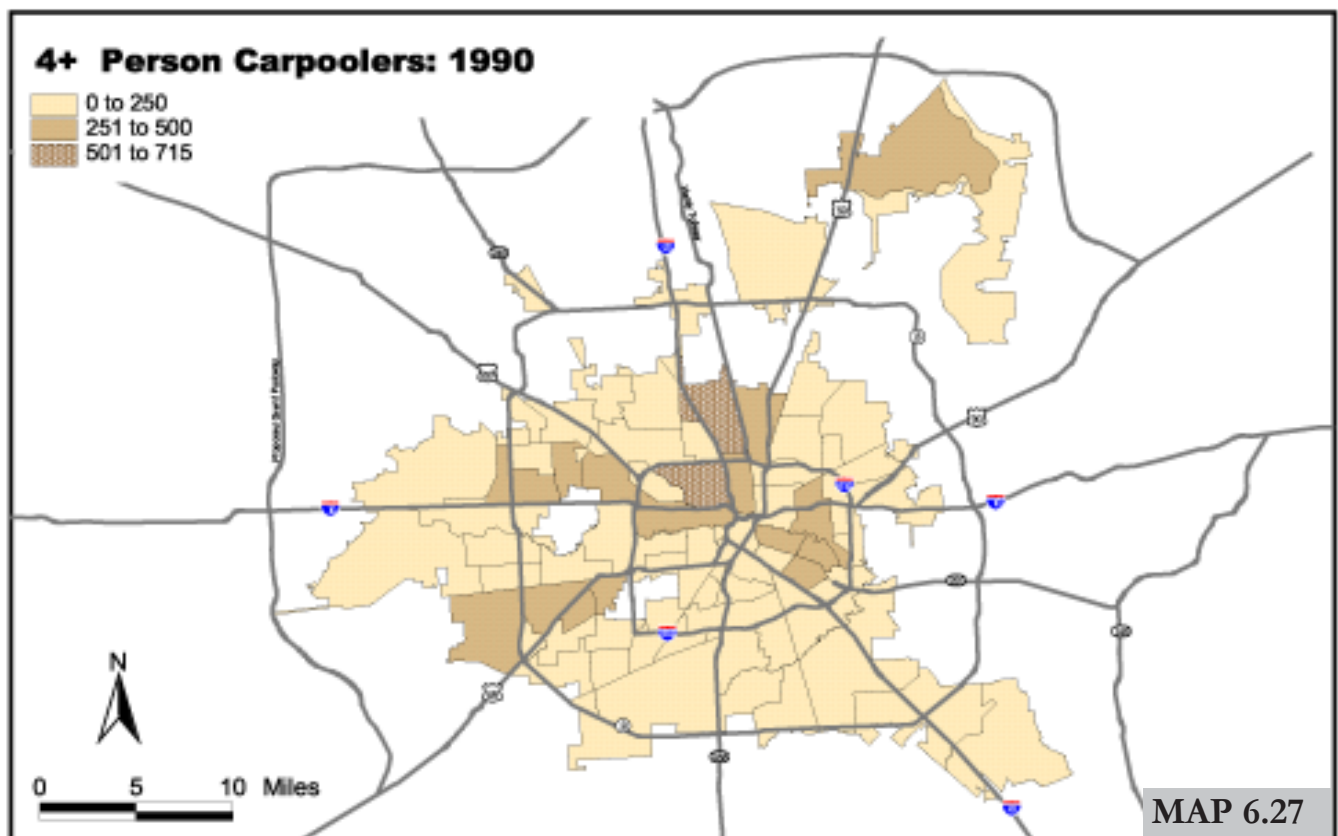
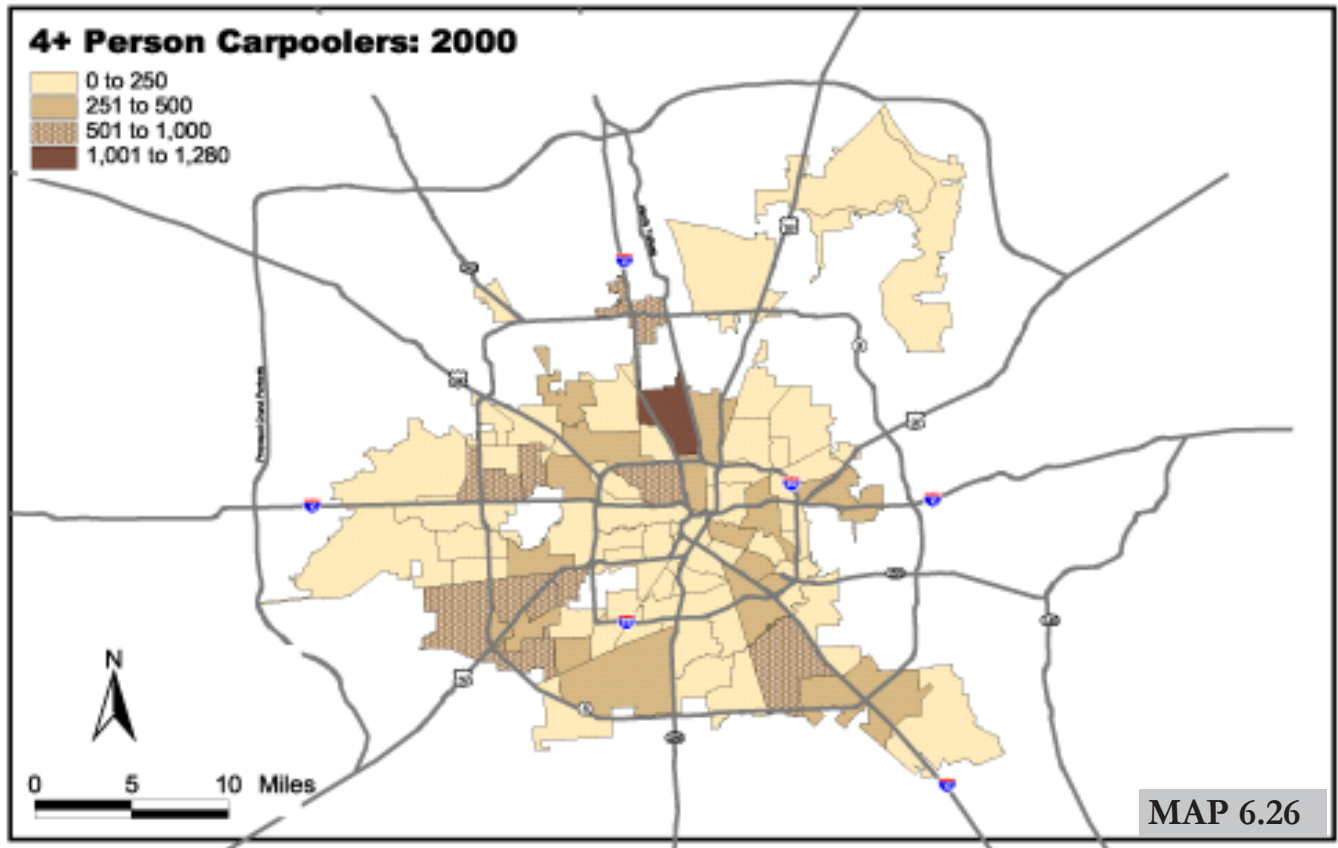
Chapter 6: Journey to Work



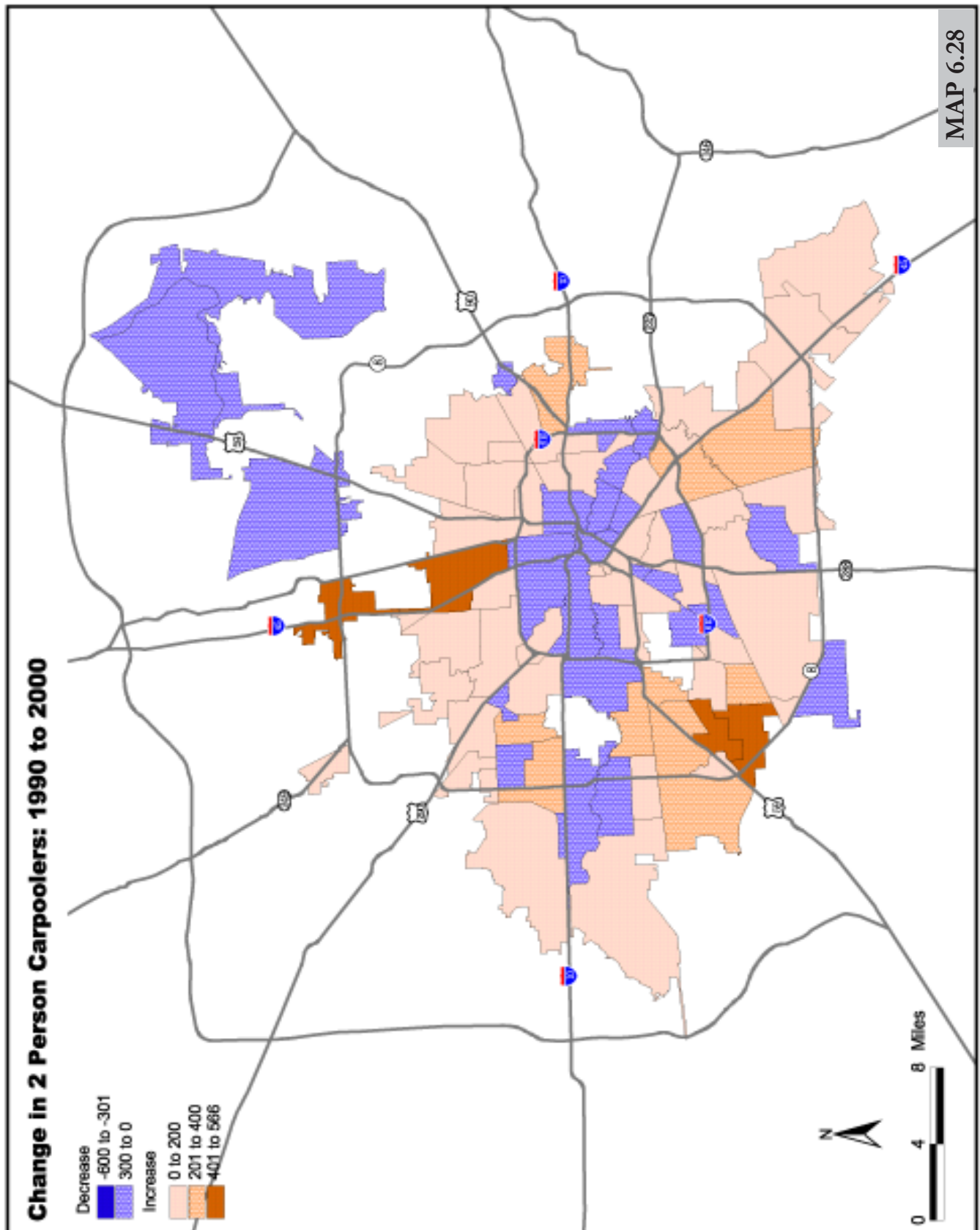
Chapter 6: Journey to Work



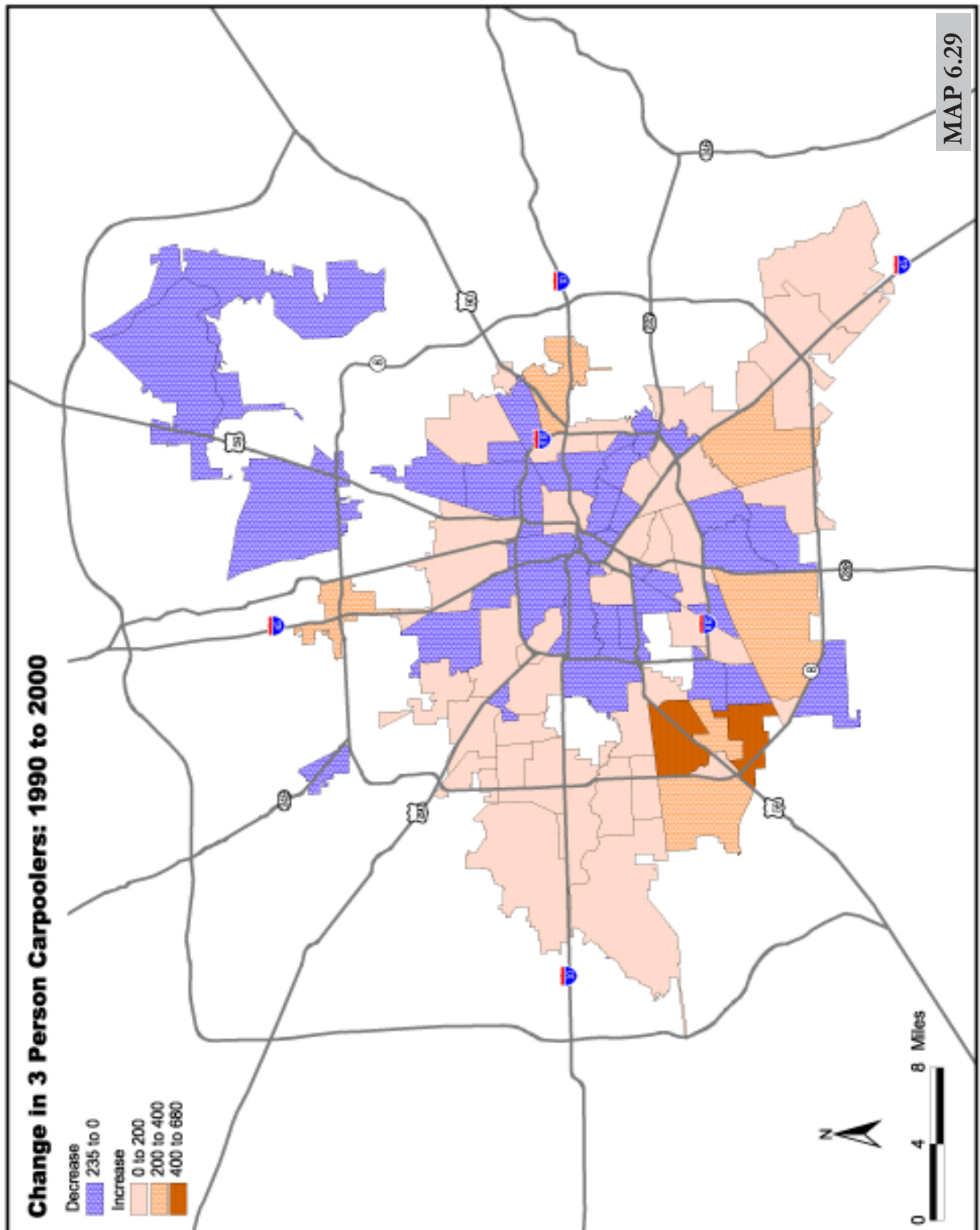
Chapter 6: Journey to Work



Chapter 6: Journey to Work



Chapter 6: Journey to Work



Chapter 6: Journey to Work

